

963/

ENGLISH PROSE AND VERSE

(SELECTIONS)



WEST BENGAL
BOARD OF SECONDARY EDUCATION
77/2, PARK STREET, CALCUTTA-700016

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FIRST EDITION : 1975
REPRINT : 1976
REPRINT : 1976

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PRINTED IN INDIA BY THE MANAGER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TEXT BOOKS PRESS, BHUBANESWAR-751005 AND PUBLISHED
BY A. C. BISWAS, SECRETARY, WEST BENGAL BOARD OF
SECONDARY EDUCATION, 77/2, PARK STREET, CALCUTTA-700016.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The West Bengal Board of Secondary Education acknowledges its indebtedness to the Publishers and Authors of the pieces included in this volume.



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PROSE
মাত্রান্তরিক সংস্করণ - ২৭

THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

AND Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him.

And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves ?

And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

*From THE HOLY BIBLE: THE NEW TESTAMENT
THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE,
CHAPTER 10, VERSES 30—37*

THE SELFISH GIANT

EVERY afternoon, as they were coming from school, the children used to go and play in the Giant's garden.

It was a large lovely garden, with soft green grass. Here and there over the grass stood beautiful flowers like stars, and there were twelve peach-trees that in the springtime broke out into delicate blossoms of pink and pearl, and in the autumn bore rich fruit. The birds sat on the trees and sang so sweetly that the children used to stop their games in order to listen to them. 'How happy we are here !' they cried to each other.

One day the Giant came back. He had been to visit his friend the Cornish Ogre, and had stayed with him for seven years. After the seven years were over he had said all that he had to say, for his conversation was limited, and he determined to return to his own castle. When he arrived he saw the children playing in the garden.

'What are you doing here ?' he cried in a very gruff voice, and the children ran away.

'My own garden is my own garden,' said the Giant; 'any one can understand that, and I will allow nobody to play in it but myself.' So he built a high wall all round it, and put up a notice-board.

TRESPASSERS
WILL BE
PROSECUTED

He was a very selfish Giant.

The poor children had now nowhere to play. They tried to play on the road, but the road was very dusty and full of hard stones, and they did not like it. They used to wander round the high walls when their lessons were over, and talk about the beautiful garden inside. 'How happy we were there!' they said to each other.

Then the Spring came, and all over the country there were little blossoms and little birds. Only in the garden of the Selfish Giant it was still winter. The birds did not care to sing in it as there were no children, and the trees forgot to blossom. Once a beautiful flower put its head out from the grass, but when it saw the notice-board it was so sorry for the children that it slipped back into the ground again, and went off to sleep. The only people who were pleased were the Snow and the Frost. 'Spring has forgotten this garden,' they cried, 'so we will live here all the year round.' The Snow covered up the grass with her great white cloak, and the Frost painted all the trees silver. Then they invited the North Wind to stay with them, and he came. He was wrapped in furs, and he roared all day about the garden, and blew the chimney-pots down. 'This is a delightful spot,' he said, 'we must ask the Hail on a visit.' So the Hail came. Every day for three hours he rattled on the roof of the castle till he broke most of the slates, and then he ran round and round the garden as fast as he could go. He was dressed in grey, and his breath was like ice.

'I cannot understand why the Spring is so late in coming,' said the Selfish Giant, as he sat at the window and looked out at his cold, white garden; 'I hope there will be a change in the weather.'

But the Spring never came, nor the Summer. The Autumn gave golden fruit to every garden, but to the Giant's garden she gave none. 'He is too selfish,' she said. So it was always Winter there, and the North Wind and the Hail, and the Frost, and the Snow danced about through the trees.

One morning the Giant was lying awake in bed when he heard some lovely music. It sounded so sweet to his ears that he thought it must be the King's musicians passing by. It was really only a little linnet singing outside his window, but it was so long since he had heard a bird sing in his garden that it seemed to him to be the most beautiful music in the world. Then the Hail stopped dancing over his head, and the North Wind ceased roaring, and a delicious perfume came to him through the open casement. 'I believe the Spring has come at last,' said the Giant; and he jumped out of bed and looked out.

What did he see ?

(He saw a most wonderful sight.) Through a little hole in the wall the children had crept in, and they were sitting in the branches of the trees. (In every tree that he could see there was a little child. And the trees were so glad to have the children back again that they had covered themselves with blossoms, and were waving their arms gently above the children's heads. The birds were flying about and twittering with delight, and the flowers were looking up through the green grass and laughing.) It was a lovely scene, only in one corner it was still winter. It was the farthest corner of the garden, and in it was standing a little boy. He was so small that he could not reach up to the branches of the tree, and he

was wandering all round it, crying bitterly. The poor tree was still covered with frost and snow, and the North Wind was blowing and roaring above it. 'Climb up! little boy,' said the Tree, and it bent its branches down as low as it could; but the boy was too tiny. ✓

And the Giant's heart melted as he looked out. 'How selfish I have been!' he said; 'now I know why the Spring would not come here. I will put that poor little boy on the top of the tree, and then I will knock down the wall, and my garden shall be the children's playground for ever and ever.' (He was really very sorry for what he had done.)

So he crept downstairs and opened the front door quite softly, and went out into the garden. But when the children saw him they were so frightened that they all ran away and the garden became winter again. Only the little boy did not run, for his eyes were so full of tears that he did not see the Giant coming. And the Giant stole up behind him and took him gently in his hand, and put him up into the tree. And the tree broke at once into blossom, and the birds came and sang on it, and the little boy stretched out his two arms and flung them round the Giant's neck, and kissed him. And the other children when they saw the Giant was not wicked any longer, came running back, and with them came the Spring. 'It is your garden now, little children,' said the Giant, and he took a great axe and knocked down the wall. And when the people were going to market at twelve o'clock they found the Giant playing with the children in the most beautiful garden they had ever seen.

All day long they played, and in the evening they came to the Giant to bid him good-bye.

‘But where is your little companion ?’ he said, ‘the boy I put into the tree.’ The Giant loved him the best because he had kissed him.

‘We don’t know,’ answered the children: ‘he has gone away.’

‘You must tell him to be sure and come to-morrow,’ said the Giant. But the children said that they did not know where he lived, and had never seen him before; and the Giant felt very ‘sad.

Every afternoon, when school was over, the children came and played with the Giant. But the little boy whom the Giant loved was never seen again. The Giant was very kind to all the children, yet he longed for his first little friend, and often spoke of him. ‘How I would like to see him !’ he used to say.

Years went over, and the Giant grew very old and feeble. He could not play about any more, so he sat in a huge arm-chair, and watched the children at their games, and admired his garden. ‘I have many beautiful flowers,’ he said; ‘but the children are the most beautiful flowers of all.’

One winter morning he looked out of his window as he was dressing. He did not hate the Winter now, for he knew that it was merely the Spring asleep, and that the flowers were resting.

Suddenly he rubbed his eyes in wonder and looked and looked. It certainly was a marvellous sight. In the farthest corner of the garden was a tree quite covered with lovely white blossoms. Its branches were golden, and

silver fruit hung down from them, and underneath it stood the little boy he had loved.

Downstairs ran the Giant in great joy, and out into the garden. He hastened across the grass, and came near to the child. And when he came quite close his face grew red with anger, and he said, 'Who hath dared to wound thee?' For on the palms of the child's hands were the prints of two nails, and the prints of two nails were on the little feet.

'Who hath dared to wound thee?' cried the Giant; 'tell me, that I may take my big sword and slay him.'

'Nay!' answered the child: 'but these are the wounds of Love.'

'Who art thou?' said the Giant, and a strange awe fell on him, and he knelt before the little child.

And the child smiled on the Giant, and said to him, 'You let me play once in your garden, to-day you shall come with me to my garden, which is Paradise.'

And when the children ran in that afternoon, they found the Giant lying dead under the tree, all covered with white blossoms.

From THE WORKS OF OSCAR WILDE

—Oscar Wilde

THREE QUESTIONS

THE thought came to a certain king that he would never fail if he always knew three things. These three things were: what was the right time for him to begin something; what people he ought to pay attention to;

and, above all, what was the most important thing for him to do.

The king therefore sent messengers throughout his kingdom, promising a large sum of money to anyone who would show him how to know the right time for every action, how to choose the right people to advise him, and how to judge what was the most important thing for him to do.

Many wise men came to the king, but they all answered his buestions differently.

In reply to the first question, some said that the king must draw up a time-table, and then live strictly according to it. Only thus, they said, could everything be done at its proper time. Others said that it was impossible to decide, before the time came, what would be the right time for doing something. The king should observe all that was going on, avoid foolish pleasures, and always do whatever seemed to be necessary at the time. Yet others said that, however carefully the king watched things around him, it would be impossible for one man to decide correctly the right time for every action. For this, they argued, he needed a Council of wise men, who would help him to act at the proper time.

But then others said that there were some things which could not wait for the decision of a Council, for they had to be decided upon at once. In order to decide whether to do such things, a person must be able to look to the future, and for that power he would have to go to the magicians.

In their answers to the second question, some said that the people most necessary to the king were his councillors;

others said, the priests; others chose the doctors; and yet others said that his soldiers were necessary above all others.

To the third question, regarding the most important activity, some replied, science; others chose fighting; and yet others, religious worship.

As the answers were so different, the king agreed with none of them and gave no reward. Instead, he decided to ask the advice of a certain hermit, widely famous for his wisdom.

This hermit lived in a wood which he never left. He saw no one but simple people, and so the king put on ordinary clothes. Before he reached the hermit's hut the king left his horse with his bodyguard and went on alone.

As the king came near, the hermit was digging the ground in front of his hut. He greeted the king and continued digging. The hermit was old and weak, and each time he turned a little earth with his spade he breathed heavily.

The king went up to the hermit and said, 'I have come to you, wise hermit, to ask you to answer three questions : how can I learn to do the right thing at the right time ? Who are the people I need most ? And what affairs are the most important ?'

The hermit listened to the king, but answered nothing. He just spat on his hands and began digging again. 'You are tired,' said the king; 'let me take the spade and work in your place.'

'Thanks,' said the hermit, giving the king his spade, and then sat down on the ground.

When the king had dug two beds, he stopped and repeated his questions. The hermit again gave no answer, but stood up, stretched out his hand for the spade, and said, 'Now rest, and let me work.'

But the king did not give him the spade, and continued to dig.

One hour passed, then another. The sun went down behind the trees, and at last the king struck the spade into the ground and said, 'I came to you, wise man, for an answer to my questions. If you can give me none, tell me so and I will return home.'

'Here comes some one running,' said the hermit.

The king turned round and saw a bearded man running towards them. His hands were pressed against his stomach, from which blood was flowing. When he reached the king he fell fainting to the ground. The king and the hermit unfastened the man's clothing and found a large wound in his stomach. The king washed and covered it with his handkerchief, but the blood would not stop flowing. The king again and again redressed the wound until at last the bleeding stopped.

The man began to feel better and asked for something to drink. The king brought fresh water and gave it to him. By this time the sun had set and the air was cool. So the king, with the hermit's help, carried the wounded man into the hut and laid him on the bed. The man closed his eyes and lay quiet. The king, tired by his walk and the work he had done, laid himself down on the floor and slept throughout the short summer night. When

he awoke, it was several minutes before he could remember where he was or who was the strange bearded man lying on the bed, looking at him closely with shining eyes.

‘Forgive me !’ said the bearded man in a weak voice, when he saw that the king was awake and looking at him.

‘I do not know you and have nothing to forgive you for,’ said the king.

‘You do not know me, but I know you. I am that enemy of yours who swore to revenge himself on you, because you put his brothers to death and seized his property. I knew you had gone alone to see the hermit, and I made up my mind kill you on your way home. But the day passed and you did not return. So I left my hiding-place, and I came upon your bodyguard, who recognised me and wounded me. I escaped from them, but I should have died if you had not dressed my wounds. I wished to kill you and you have saved my life. Now, if I live, and if you wish it, I will serve you as your most faithful slave and will order my sons to do the same. Forgive me !’

The king was very glad to have made peace with his enemy so easily, and to have gained him for a friend. He not only forgave him, but said he would send his servants and his own doctor to attend him, and he promised to give back the man his property.

So, leaving the wounded man, the king went out of the hut and looked round for the hermit. Before going away he wished once more to beg an answer to his questions. The hermit was on his knees sowing seeds in the beds that had been dug the day before. The king went up to the

hermit and said, 'For the last time, I pray you to answer my questions, wise man.'

'You have already been answered !' said the hermit, still bending down to the ground and looking up at the king as he stood before him.

'How answered ? What do you mean ?' asked the king.

'Do you not see ?' replied the hermit. 'If you had not pitied my weakness yesterday and had not dug these beds for me, but had gone on your way, that man would have attacked you and you would have wished you had stayed with me. So the most important time was when you were digging the beds; and I was the most important man; and to do me good was your most important business. Afterwards, when the man ran to us, the most important time was when you were attending to him for if you had not dressed his wounds he would have died without having made peace with you. So he was the most important man, and what you did for him was your most important business.'

'Remember, then : there is only one time that is important—' Now ! It is the most important time because it is the only time when we have any power.'

'The most necessary man is the man you are with at any moment, for no man knows whether he will ever meet anyone else : and the most important business is, to do that man good, because man was sent into this life for that purpose alone.'

OUR LADY'S JUGGLER

IN the days of King Louis there was a poor juggler in France, a native of Compiegne, Barnaby by name, who went about from town to town performing feats of skill and strength.

On fair days he would unfold an old worn-out carpet in the public square, and when by means of a jovial address, which he had learned of a very ancient juggler, and which he never varied in the least, he had drawn together the children and loafers, he assumed extraordinary attitudes, and balanced a tin plate on the tip of his nose. At first the crowd would feign indifference.

But when, supporting himself on his hands face downwards, he threw into the air six copper balls, which glittered in the sunshine, and caught them again with his feet; or when throwing himself backwards until his heels and the nape of the neck met, giving his body the form of a perfect wheel, he would juggle in this posture with a dozen knives, a murmur of admiration would escape the spectators, and pieces of money rain down upon the carpet.

Nevertheless, like the majority of those who live by their wits, Barnaby of Compiegne had a great struggle to make a living.

Earning his bread in the sweat of his brow, he bore rather more than his share of the penalties consequent upon the misdoings of our father Adam.

Again, he was unable to work as constantly as he would have been willing to do. The warmth of the sun and the broad daylight were as necessary to enable him

to display his brilliant parts as to the trees if flower and fruit should be expected of them. In winter time he was nothing more than a tree stripped of its leaves, and as it were dead. The frozen ground was hard to the juggler, and, like the grasshopper of which Marie de France tells us the inclement season caused him to suffer both cold and hunger. But as he was simple-natured he bore his ills patiently.

He had never meditated on the origin of wealth, nor upon the inequality of human conditions. He believed firmly that if this life should prove hard, the life to come could not fail to redress the balance, and this hope upheld him. He did not resemble those thievish and miscreant Merry Andrews who sell their soul to the devil. He never blasphemed God's name; he lived uprightly, and although he had no wife of his own, he did not covet his neighbour's, since woman is ever the enemy of the strong man, as it appears by the history of Samson recorded in the Scriptures.

In truth, his was not a nature much disposed to carnal delights, and it was a greater deprivation to him to forsake the tankard than the Hebe who bore it. For whilst not wanting in sobriety, he was fond of a drink when the weather waxed hot. He was a worthy man who feared God, and was very devoted to the Blessed Virgin.

Never did he fail on entering a church to fall upon his knees before the image of the Mother of God, and offer up this prayer to her :

“Blessed Lady, keep watch over my life until it shall please God that I die, and when I am dead, ensure to me the possession of the joys of paradise.”

II

Now on a certain evening after a dreary wet day, as Barnaby pursued his road, sad and bent, carrying under his arm his balls and knives wrapped up in his old carpet, on the watch for some barn where, though he might not sup, he might sleep, he perceived on the road, going in the same direction as himself, a monk, whom he saluted courteously. And as they walked at the same rate they fell into conversation with one another.

"Fellow traveller," said the monk, "how comes it about that you are clothed all in green? Is it perhaps in order to take the part of a jester in some mystery play?"

"Not at all, good father," replied Barnaby. "Such as you see me, I am called Barnaby, and for my calling I am a juggler. There would be no pleasanter calling in the world if it would always provide one with daily bread."

"Friend Barnaby," returned the monk, "be careful what you say. There is no calling more pleasant than the monastic life. Those who lead it are occupied with the praises of God, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints; and, indeed, the religious life is one ceaseless hymn to the Lord."

Barnaby replied—

"Good father, I own that I spoke like an ignorant man. Your calling cannot be in any respect compared to mine, and although there may be some merit in dancing with a penny balanced on a stick on the tip of one's nose, it is not a merit which comes within hail of your own. Gladly would I, like you, good father, sing my office day

by day, and especially the office of the most Holy Virgin, to whom I have vowed a singular devotion. In order to embrace the monastic life I would willingly abandon the art by which from Soissons to Beauvais I am well known in upwards of six hundred towns and villages."

The monk was touched by the juggler's simplicity, and as he was not lacking in discernment, he at once recognised in Barnaby one of those men of whom it is said in the Scriptures : Peace on earth to men of good will. And for this reason he replied—

"Friend Barnaby, come with me, and I will have you admitted into the monastery of which I am Prior. He who guided St. Mary of Egypt in the desert set me upon your path to lead you into the way of salvation."

It was in this manner, then, that Barnaby became a monk. In the monastery into which he was received the religious vied with one another in the worship of the Blessed Virgin, and in her honour each employed all the knowledge and all the skill which God had given him.

The prior on his part wrote books dealing according to the rules of scholarship with the virtues of the Mother of God.

Brother Maurice, with a deft hand copied out these treatises upon sheets of vellum.

Brother Alexander adorned the leaves with delicate miniature paintings. Here were displayed the Queen of Heaven seated upon Solomon's throne, and while four lions were on guard at her feet, around the nimbus which

encircled her head hovered seven doves, which are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the gifts, namely, of Fear, Piety, Knowledge, Strength, Counsel, Understanding, and Wisdom. For her companions she had six virgins with hair of gold, namely, Humility, Prudence, Seclusion, Submission, Virginity, and Obedience.

At her feet were two little naked figures, perfectly white, in an attitude of supplication. These were souls imploring her all-powerful intercession for their soul's health, and we may be sure not imploring in vain.

Upon another page facing this, Brother Alexander represented Eve, so that the Fall and the Redemption could be perceived at one and the same time—Eve the Wife abased, and Mary the Virgin exalted.

Furthermore, to the marvel of the beholder, this book contained presentments of the Well of Living Waters, the Fountain, the Lily, the Moon, the Sun, and the Garden Enclosed of which the Song of Songs tells us, the Gate of Heaven and the City of God, and all these things were symbols of the Blessed Virgin.

Brother Marbode was likewise one of the most loving children of Mary.

He spent all his days carving images in stone, so that his beard, his eyebrows, and his hair were white with dust and his eyes continually swollen and weeping; but his strength and cheerfulness were not diminished, although he was now well gone in years, and it was clear that the Queen of Paradise still cherished her servant in his old age. Marbode represented her seated upon a throne,

her brow encircled with an orb-shaped nimbus set with pearls. And he took care that the folds of her dress should cover the feet of her, concerning whom the prophet declared. My beloved is as a garden enclosed.

Sometimes, too, he depicted her in the semblance of a child full of grace, and appearing to say, "Thou art my God, even from my mother's womb."

In the priory, moreover, were poets who composed hymns in Latin, both in prose and verse, in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and amongst the company was even a brother from Picardy who sang the miracles of Our Lady in rhymed verse and in the vulgar tongue.

III

Being a witness of this emulation in praise and the glorious harvest of their labours, Barnaby mourned his own ignorance and simplicity.

"Alas !" he sighed, as he took his solitary walk in the little shelterless garden of the monastery "wretched wight that I am, to be unable, like my brothers, worthily to praise the Holy Mother of God, to whom I have vowed my whole heart's affection. Alas ! alas ! I am but a rough man and unskilled in the arts, and I can render you in service, Blessed Lady, neither edifying sermons, nor treatises set out in order according to rule, nor ingenious paintings, nor statues truthfully sculptured, nor verses whose march is measured to the beat of feet. No gift have I, alas !"

After this fashion he groaned and gave himself up to sorrow. But one evening, when the monks were spending their hour of liberty in conversation, he heard one of

them tell the tale of a religious man who could repeat nothing other than the Ave Maria. This poor man was despised for his ignorance; but after his death there issued forth from his mouth five roses in honour of the five letters of the name Mary (Marie), and thus his sanctity was made manifest.

Whilst he listened to this narrative Barnaby marvelled yet once again at the loving kindness of the Virgin; but the lesson of that blessed death did not avail to console him, for his heart overflowed with zeal, and he longed to advance the glory of his Lady, who is in heaven.

How to compass this he sought but could find no way, and day by day he became the more cast down, when one morning he awakened filled full with joy, hastened to the chapel, and remained there alone for more than an hour. After dinner he returned to the chapel once more.

And, starting from that moment, he repaired daily to the chapel at such hours as it was deserted, and spent within it a good part of the time which the other monks devoted to the liberal and mechanical arts. His sadness vanished, nor did he any longer groan.

A demeanour so strange awakened the curiosity of the monks.

These began to ask one another for what purpose Brother Barnaby could be indulging so persistently in retreat.

The prior, whose duty it is to let nothing escape him in the behaviour of his children in religion, resolved to keep a watch over Barnaby during his withdrawals to the

chapel. One day, then, when he was shut up there after his custom, the prior, accompanied by two of the older monks, went to discover through the chinks in the door what was going on within the chapel.

They saw Barnaby before the altar of the Blessed Virgin, head downwards, with his feet in the air, and he was juggling with six balls of copper and a dozen knives. In honour of the Holy Mother of God he was performing those feats, which aforetime had won him most renown. Not recognizing that the simple fellow was thus placing at the service of the Blessed Virgin his knowledge and skill, the two old monks exclaimed against the sacrilege.

The prior was aware how stainless was Barnaby's soul, but he concluded that he had been seized with madness. They were all three preparing to lead him swiftly from the chapel, when they saw the Blessed Virgin descend the steps of the altar and advance to wipe away with a fold of her azure robe the sweat which was dropping from her juggler's forehead.

Then the prior, falling upon his face upon the pavement, uttered these words :—

“Blessed are the simple-hearted, for they shall see God.”

“Amen !” responded the old brethren, and kissed the ground.

—*Anatole France*

A MIGHTY HERO OF OLDEN TIMES

MANY hundreds of years ago, there was born a little baby who grew up to be the strongest and most wonderful man of his time.

When he was but a few weeks old, Juno, who hated his mother and therefore wished to kill the little boy, sent two huge snakes to strangle him in his cradle.

The nurse screamed when she saw the serpents coiling themselves round the child, and her scream woke the baby, Hercules, from his sleep. Starting up in his cradle, he seized the snakes, one with each hand, and wrung their necks. The astonished nurse could hardly believe what she saw.

You can well understand how such a wonderful baby might grow up into a remarkable man. Hercules was, in fact, the strongest man of whom the world has any record. Nowadays, when we wish to say that anyone is very, very powerful, we call his strength Herculean.

Hercules spent the greater part of his life in doing things to help weaker people. Juno still wanted to show her hatred of him, so she sent him into all sorts of dangers. He had to fight hard battles, and kill fierce monsters, and, in short, risk his life all the time. But he was so brave that he feared nothing, and so strong that he overcame all the dangers Juno placed in his path. When the queen saw this, she hit upon a new plan for making him unhappy,—she made him a slave to the king of Argos.

Nothing could have been harder for Hercules to bear than slavery; for he had a restless spirit, which made him chafe night and day under the chains that bound him. The king at last took pity on him, and told him he would set him free if he would perform twelve very difficult tasks. Nothing could have suited Hercules better, for he delighted in danger and deeds of valour.

And that is how the hero came to perform those wonderful deeds known as the twelve great labours of Hercules. It would take too long to tell you much about them, for each is a story in itself. There were monsters and dragons and giants and other horrible creatures to be killed, and fleet horses and fierce animals to be captured, and many bloody battles to be fought, before the brave man could gain his freedom. But at last all the dangers were overcome, and Hercules was set free. He started forth on his wanderings with a light heart.

But he had not gone far, when he came to a country ruled by a king who had a very beautiful daughter, Deianira, and before many days Hercules had asked her to be his wife. The girl would have said yes gladly, but she knew that her father had half promised her in marriage to a great river god. The king was undecided as to what he should do; but at length it was agreed that Hercules and the river god should show their strength by wrestling together, and that the victor should marry the king's daughter.

Such a way of settling the dispute may seem very strange to us, but it pleased both the suitors. Hercules felt sure that he would win, because he was so strong; and the river god felt equally sure that he would be the victor, because he could disguise himself, at any moment and take on the form of an animal.

So when the time set for the match arrived, both the suitors went with light hearts to the meeting-place. The king gave the signal for the start, and the two mighty ones fell upon each other.

Very soon everybody could see that Hercules was uppermost. Against his mighty strength, the river god was like a child. But just as the hero was clasping his great arms about his rival to throw him down, the river god used his magic power, and, in the form of a serpent, glided from his grasp.

“Aha,” laughed Hercules, when he saw what had happened, “you think you will escape me that way? Why, I slew serpents thrice your size when I was but a baby in the cradle.” And he sprang upon the serpent and in an instant would have wrung its neck, when lo! it had vanished, and in its stead there stood a fierce looking bull. The river god had saved himself by again changing his form.

Now followed the fiercest part of the fight. The angry bull dashed at Hercules with terrible force; but the hero was ready for the attack, and, seizing him by the horns, held him down fast to the ground in spite of his struggles, until all the people cried out that Hercules was the victor.

The river god then appeared in his true shape, and yielded his claim. So Hercules gained the king’s fair daughter for his bride.

In that last fierce struggle, one of the bull’s horns was broken off. The goddess of Plenty, or Fortune, as she is sometimes called, found it lying forgotten on the ground. She was so much pleased with its shape that she filled it with her autumn fruits and flowers and took it for her emblem. And this is the story of the origin of the horn of plenty, which we see at so many of our autumn festivals.

 A DAILY DRAMA

FROM my Uncle Podger's house to the railway station was eight minutes' walk. My uncle always said :

“Give yourself a quarter of an hour, and walk gently.”

What he always did was to start five minutes before the time and run.

Many fat gentlemen lived at Ealing and caught this train to Town. They all started late; they all carried a black bag and a newspaper in one hand, and an umbrella in the other; and for the last quarter of a mile to the station, whether the weather was wet or fine, they all ran.

People with nothing else to do used to gather in the street on fine mornings to watch them pass, and shout encouragement to them. They did not run well, they did not even run fast; but they tried their hardest.

My uncle always get up early enough, but troubles seemed to come to him at the last moment. The first thing he did after breakfast was to lose his newspaper. Whenever he lost anything, my Uncle Podger did not say to himself, “I am a careless old man. I lose everything. I never know where I have put anything. I can never find it again for myself. I must be a great trouble to everybody round me.” No; whenever he lost anything, he always blamed everybody except himself.

“I had it in my hand a minute ago !” he would cry.

“Perhaps you have left it in the garden,” my aunt would suggest.

“Why should I leave it in the garden ? I don’t want a paper in the garden; I want the paper in the train with me.”

“Have you put it in your pocket ?”

“Do you think I should be standing here at five minutes to nine looking for it if I had it in my pocket all the time ? Do you think I’m a fool ?”

Here somebody would ask, “What’s this ?” and hand him from somewhere a folded newspaper.

“I do wish people would leave my things alone,” he would say, taking it angrily.

He would open his bag to put it in, and then, taking a quick look at it, he would pause, speechless.

“What’s the matter ?” my aunt would ask.

“It’s yesterday’s paper !” he would shout, throwing it down upon the table.

We found the right one for him at last; very often he was sitting on it.

And then he smiled, sadly, as if he was living with a lot of hopeless fools.

“All the time, right in front of your noses—!”

Then he would go to the hall where it was my aunt’s custom to have all the children ready to say good-bye to him.

One of them, of course, was sure to be missing, and the moment this was noticed all the others would run

off with loud cries to find it. More minutes passed while this was going on, which was just enough time for my uncle to find his umbrella and lose his hat. Then, at last, when everyone was together in the hall again, the clock would strike nine.

The eldest boy would say that the clock was five minutes slow; he knew because he had been late for school the day before as a result of it.

At this, my uncle began to rush madly towards the gate, where he would remember that he had with him neither his bag nor his umbrella. When, finally, he had gone, we used to discover on the hall table the most important thing of all that he had forgotten, and wondered what he would say about it when he came home.

An Extract from "THREE MEN ON THE BUMMEL"
—Jerome K. Jerome

A MAD TEA PARTY

THERE was a table set out under a tree in front of the house, and the March Hare and the Hatter were having tea at it : a Dormouse was sitting between them, fast asleep, and the other two were using it as a cushion, resting their elbows on it, and talking over its head. "Very uncomfortable for the Dormouse," thought Alice; "only, as it's asleep, I suppose it doesn't mind."

The table was a large one, but the three were all crowded together at one corner of it. "No room ! No room !" they cried out when they saw Alice coming.

"There's plenty of room!" said Alice indignantly, and she sat down in a large arm-chair at one end of the table.

"Have some wine," the March Hare said in an encouraging tone.

Alice looked all round the table, but there was nothing on it but tea. "I don't see any wine," she remarked.

"There isn't any," said the March Hare.

"Then it wasn't very civil of you to offer it," said Alice angrily.

"It wasn't very civil of you to sit down without being invited," said the March Hare.

"I didn't know it was your table," said Alice : "it's laid for a great many more than three."

"Your hair wants cutting," said the Hatter. He had been looking at Alice for some time with great curiosity, and this was his first speech.

"You should learn not to make personal remarks," Alice said with some severity : "It's very rude."

The Hatter opened his eyes very wide on hearing this; but all he said was, "Why is a raven like a writing-desk?"

"Come, we shall have some fun now!" thought Alice. "I'm glad they've begun asking riddles—I believe I can guess that," she added aloud.

"Do you mean that you think you can find out the answer to it?" said the March Hare.

“Exactly so,” said Alice.

“Then you should say what you mean,” the March Hare went on.

“I do,” Alice hastily replied; “at least—at least I mean what I say—that’s the same thing, you know.”

“Not the same thing a bit!” said the Hatter. “Why, you might just as well say that ‘I see what I eat’ is the same thing as ‘I eat what I see’!”

“You might just as well say,” added the March Hare, “that ‘I like what I get’ is the same thing as ‘I get what I like’!”

“You might just as well say,” added the Dormouse, which seemed to be talking in its sleep, “that ‘I breathe when I sleep’ is the same thing as ‘I sleep when I breathe’!”

“It is the same thing with you,” said the Hatter, and here the conversation dropped, and the party sat silent for a minute, while Alice thought over all she could remember about ravens and writing-desks, which wasn’t much.

The Hatter was the first to break the silence. “What day of the month is it?” he said, turning to Alice : he had taken his watch out of his pocket; and was looking at it uneasily, shaking it every now and then, and holding it to his ear.

Alice considered a little, and then said, “The fourth.”

“Two days wrong!” sighed the Hatter. “I told you butter wouldn’t suit the works?” he added, looking angrily at the March Hare.

"It was the best butter," the March Hare meekly replied.

"Yes, but some crumbs must have got in as well," the Hatter grumbled : "you shouldn't have put it in with the breadknife."

The March Hare took the watch and looked at it gloomily : then he dipped it into his cup of tea, and looked at it again: but he could think of nothing better to say than his first remark, "It was the best butter, you know."

Alice had been looking over his shoulder with some curiosity. "What a funny watch!" she remarked. "It tells the day of the month, and doesn't tell what o'clock it is!"

"Why should it?" muttered the Hatter. "Does your watch tell you what year it is?"

"Of course not," Alice replied very readily : "but that's because it stays the same year for such a long time together."

"Which is just the case with mine," said the Hatter.

Alice felt dreadfully puzzled. The Hatter's remark seemed to her to have no sort of meaning in it, and yet it was certainly English. "I don't quite understand you," she said, as politely as she could.

"The Dormouse is asleep again," said the Hatter, and he poured a little hot tea upon its nose.

The Dormouse shook its head impatiently, and said, without opening its eyes, "Of course, of course : just what I was going to remark myself."

“Have you guessed the riddle yet ?” the Hatter said, turning to Alice again.

“No I give it up,” Alice replied. “What’s the answer ?”

“I haven’t the slightest idea,” said the Hatter.

“Nor I,” said the March Hare.

Alice sighed wearily. “I think you might do something better with the time,” she said, “than wasting it in asking riddles that have no answers.”

An Extract from THE ANNOTATED ALICE

‘A MAD TEA PARTY’

—Lewis Carroll

CONVERSATIONS :

(I) THE LAWYER

Robert Lindsay,	<i>a lawyer.</i>
Richard Goodall	<i>Brothers, sons of Farmer George</i>
Henry Goodall	<i>Henry Goodall, who has just died.</i>
Pamela Goodall,	<i>Richard’s wife.</i>
Kathleen Goodall,	<i>Henry’s wife.</i>
Tom Nutting,	<i>a farm worker.</i>
Mary Bray,	<i>a woman who works in the house.</i>

[A room in George Goodall’s house in the country. The two brothers and their wives are sitting in big chairs, and Nutting on a small chair near the door. Mary Bray opens the door and brings Lindsay in. He has some papers in one hand.]

Mary (standing at the door) : Mr. Lindsay ! (She starts to go out again, but Lindsay stops her.)

Lindsay : Good afternoon, all !

All : Good afternoon !

Richard : Oh, come in, Lindsay. We're all glad that you were able to come. (*Lindsay sits down.*)

Lindsay : Thanks. To tell you the truth, I haven't much time now. I'll have to go away very soon, and come back again to-morrow. Shall we leave the whole thing until to-morrow ?

Richard : Oh, no ! Can't you tell us now ?

Lindsay : Well perhaps I can tell you most of it now in a few words. (*He looks at Mary, who is still by the door.*) I think that Miss Bray ought to stay with us.

Richard : Certainly, if you wish. Come in, Mary, and sit down.

Mary : Thank you, sir. (*She sits on a small chair near Nutting.*)

Lindsay : Did you bring your horse, Nutting ?

Nutting : Yes. It's in the garden behind the house.

Lindsay : Good !

(*All the others look surprised.*)

Lindsay : You'll understand that later, I hope. Now I mustn't waste time. (*He holds the papers up.*) I'll tell you Mr. George Goodall's wishes. He says this. (*He reads.*) "I leave to my dear son Richard one thousand pounds and to my dear son Henry one thousand pounds....."

Henry : Is that all ? Father had a lot more than that.

Kathleen : Yes, he had.

Pamela : He had thousands more.

Lindsay : Please ! Please ! I'm only just beginning.

Richard : I think that we ought to listen to Mr. Lindsay. Perhaps he has something more to say.

Lindsay : Yes, a great deal more. (*He reads.*) "I have believed for a long time that my two sons, who have spent all their lives in England, ought to travel to other countries and see the world, and I give this money to them so that they and their wives may leave England for six months and travel in any other country or countries as they wish. But if they do not wish to leave England for six months then this money shall be given to the Devonset Home for Lost Animals. And I leave to my old friend Tom Nutting one thousand pounds and to my faithful servant Mary Bray two hundred pounds for every year or part of a year that she has spent working for me."

Nutting : A thousand pounds ! What can I do with all that money ?

Richard : Put it in the bank, Tom. It will be useful one day.

Pamela : Leave England !

Kathleen : Other countries ! Where shall we go ?

Lindsay : How long have you worked in this house, Miss Bray ?

Mary : Nearly three and a half years, sir. I came here for the first time in March, 1957.

Lindsay : Three years and part of one year. Well, that means that you must have four times two hundred pounds : that's eight hundred pounds.

Mary : But I'm only a poor woman, sir ! Eight hundred pounds is too much for me. Eight hundred pounds ! Oh, no, sir !

Lindsay : We must follow Mr. Goodall's wishes, Miss Bray, and so you must have eight hundred pounds.

Mary : There wasn't a better man in the world ; and now he's dead ! (*She starts to cry.*)

Richard : Have you finished, Lindsay ?

Lindsay : Oh, no. There's a lot more. Shall I read it ? (*He looks at the clock.*) I haven't much more time.

Henry : Can't you tell us shortly, in your own words ?

Richard : Yes ! Can you do that ?

Lindsay : Oh, yes; it's easy enough, I think. I'll do that and then read the whole thing to you to-morrow when I have more time. Your father wanted you to travel, and to spend six months out of England, and so he left a thousand pounds to each of you. That's enough money for six months. If you go, Nutting can be left in charge of the farm. But if you don't stay away for six months, this money will go to a home for lost animals.

Richard : Is there nothing else ?

Lindsay : Oh, yes, there is. You, Richard, receive ten thousand pounds and the house and some horses. And you, Henry, receive seven thousand pounds and the car and some horses. And there's a lot about the farm. We'll talk about that to-morrow.

Richard and Henry : Oh !

Lindsay : Do you both wish to leave England for six months ?

Richard : Must we go together ? Must Henry and I travel together, I mean ?

Lindsay : Oh, no. You can go to Bangkok if you like, and Henry can go to Puerto Rico. But each of you must take his wife with him and stay away for six months.

Kathleen : This is wonderful ! We'll go to Germany, Henry. I've always wanted to see the Black Forest. We'll fly to Baden-Baden !

Henry : But I want to go to Istanbul ! And I don't like flying ; you know that very well. We'll go to Istanbul by sea.

Kathleen : No ships for me ! I don't want to be sea-sick.

Pamela : We'll go to India, won't we, Richard ?

Richard : Oh, I don't think so. We'll go to Burma and see Mandalay.

Pamela : Oh, but I want to see Delhi. I've heard so much about it.

Lindsay : What will Miss Bray do when you're away ? There won't be anyone in the house for six months.

Kathleen : Mary, will you come with us to Germany ? We shall go by air.

Mary : Oh, Mrs. Goodall, I've never been out of England. I'll be afraid of everything if I go to Germany. And I've never been in an aeroplane in my life.

Henry : It doesn't matter because we're not going to Germany and we're not going to fly. We're going to Istanbul in a ship.

Mary : Is that nearer, sir ?

Henry : No, it isn't. It's farther.

Kathleen : It's much farther; but we aren't going there.

Henry : I want to see Istanbul. I won't go to Germany. And I certainly won't fly.

Kathleen : I won't go anywhere by sea. If I do, I'll be sea-sick all the way. I'm sea-sick even in a little boat.

Henry : It's easier to be sea-sick in small boat than it is in a big ship.

Lindsay (gently) : You must go together, you know.

Henry : I want to see something new and different, something far away and wonderful.

Richard : I'm going to Mandalay for the same reason.

Pamela : Then you'll go there alone.

Richard : Oh, no. You must come with me. If you don't, I won't get the thousand pounds.

Pamela : You'll get it if you come with me to India. India's a wonderful place. Delhi !

Kathleen : Baden-Baden !

Richard : Mandalay !

Henry : Istanbul !

Mary : I want to stay here.

Kathleen : You can't. You're coming with us to Germany.

Pamela : We all want different things. What shall we do ?

Nutting (slowly) : I seem to be the only happy person in the room except Mr. Lindsay.

Lindsay (looking at the clock) : I'm not very happy myself. Look at the time ! I shall have to leave you to talk about this, but perhaps I can help you a little before I go. Richard and his wife can go first to India and then to Burma. They can fly from India to Burma in a few hours. Henry and his wife can take the car and drive to Germany and then go on to Istanbul. That's quite possible. If they go in the car, Henry won't have to fly, and his wife won't be sea-sick, and they have six months. Perhaps you will all think about this, and we'll talk about it to-morrow.

Henry : Of course ! We have a good car now, Kathleen ! We can go by road !

Richard : Yes. And we can easily go to India and Burma.

Lindsay : Now there's still the little matter of the horses.

Richard : There aren't many horses, are there ? What does Father say about them ?

Lindsay (reading) : "And to my dear son Richard I leave one half of the number of my horses which are

alive at the time of my death, and to my dear son Henry I leave one third of the number, and to my old friend Tom Nutting I leave one twelfth of the number."

Nutting : How many horses does that mean ?

Pamela : It's clear enough, isn't it ?

Lindsay : It's not as easy as it looks.

Richard : Why ?

Lindsay : How many horses are there in the fields, Nutting ?

Nutting : Eleven, sir.

Lindsay : Yes, I thought so.

Richard : Oh, I see ! Yes !

Pamela : What's the matter ?

Richard : The matter is the number, my dear. One half of eleven isn't very easy. It's five and a half horses, and no one wants half a horse. It's useless.

Pamela : Oh !

Kathleen : One third of eleven is (*She stops.*)

Henry : Three and two thirds, my dear Kathleen. What are we going to do about this ? And Nutting ought to have one twelfth of eleven horses. That's not even a whole horse.

Lindsay (*standing up*) : I must go now; I'm sorry. I'll see you to-morrow.

Henry : But you can't leave us in this state ! What are we going to do about the horses ? You had a good plan

to help us with our travels. Can't you tell us what to do with the horses too ?

Nutting : Will it help, sir, if I don't take any ? I have one. Mr. George gave it to me last year. One's enough for me.

Lindsay : It won't help us, Nutting.

Henry : Why did you tell Tom to bring his horse here to-day ?

Lindsay (*sitting down again*) : I've given some thought to this matter, and it seemed to be the only thing to do.

Henry : But it's his horse, not Father's.

Richard : Well, it doesn't matter. I'll take some of the horses, and Henry can take some, and Nutting can have some.

Lindsay : Oh, no, no. We can't do that ! "Some." No, no ! I don't like that at all. I'm a lawyer, my dear Richard, "Some" isn't clear, and we must be clear. We must do our best to follow your father's wishes.

Richard : But that's impossible. We don't want parts of horses.

Lindsay : There's one way of doing this, and only one. Please listen. Nutting's horse is out there in the garden. Your father had eleven horses and they're in the fields. So, if you think of all the horses together, there are twelve. You, Richard, take one half of the number : that's six. And Nutting takes one twelfth of twelve : that's one.

Henry : But one is his now.

Lindsay : Yes, yes. It's in the garden. Richard must take six from the fields, Henry four from the fields, and Nutting one from the fields. Six and four and one are eleven. So you take eleven from the fields and there are eleven in the fields. (*He stands up.*) And after that, Nutting takes his own horse from the garden, and goes home with two. Good afternoon, all ! I'll see you to-morrow. (*He goes out quickly with a last look at the clock.*)

(II) KEEP TO THE LEFT

A Policeman

A Visitor to England

[*A street in an English town. A policeman stops a car. In the car there is a visitor from another country.*]

Policeman (*holding up his hand*) : Stop !

Visitor (in car) : What's the matter ?

Policeman : Why are you driving on the right side of the road ?

Visitor : Do you want me to drive on the wrong side ?

Policeman : You are driving on the wrong side.

Visitor : But you said that I was driving on the right side.

Policeman : That's right. You're on the right, and that's wrong.

Visitor : A strange country ! If right is wrong, I'm right when I am on the wrong side. So why did you stop me ?

Policeman : My dear sir, you must keep to the left. The right side is the left.

Visitor : It's like a looking-glass ! I'll try to remember. Well, I want to go to Bellwood. Will you kindly tell me the way ?

Policeman : Certainly. At the end of this road, turn left.

Visitor : Now let me think. Turn left ! In England left is right, and right is wrong. Am I right ?

Policeman : You'll be right if you turn left. But if you turn right, you'll be wrong.

Visitor : Thank you. It's as clear as daylight.

(III) NO TIME TO WASTE

Doctor Vine : *A busy doctor*

Mr. Lester : *One of his friends*

[**Doctor Vine** is busy at a table with some papers.

Lester runs into the room. He has black marks on his face and hands.]

Vine : This is the wrong time of the day to come to see me.

Lester : I just wanted to.....

Vine : Everyone always "just wants" something or other. I'm going out. What have you done to your face and hands ? Have you had a fight with someone ? At your age ? You mustn't do that kind of thing. How's your heart ? I'll just listen to it. Take your coat off.

Lester : But you don't need to do that.

Vine : Oh, yes, I do. Are you trying to teach me my business ? Take your coat off at once.

Lester : I won't.

Vine : Oh, yes, you will. Take your coat off when I tell you. I know my own business best, and I've no time to waste.

Lester : I won't take it off. I only want....

Vine : If you don't take it off, I will. I'm a busy man. (*He pulls Lester's coat off.*) Now sit down there on that chair.

Lester : You don't understand. I just want....

Vine : Sit down and don't talk. (*He pulls Lester down on the chair.*) That's better. Now don't move.

Lester : But.....

Vine : And don't talk. How can I listen to your heart when you're talking ? (*Listens.*) HM ! Hm ! I don't like this at all. Does your heart always go as fast as this ? You must take a long rest, my dear Lester. No more work for you and no more parties for six months.

Lester (*putting his coat on*) : I'm sorry to hear that. I came here to ask you to come to a party at my house next week. And when I reached your house, I found that it was on fire. I just wanted to tell you.

—G. C. Thornley

THE TIGRESS

THE tigress was a mile away and the ground between her and us was densely wooded, scattered over with great rocks and cut up by a number of deep ravines, but she could cover the distance well within the half-hour—if she wanted to. The question I had to decide was, whether or not I

should try to call her up. If I called and she heard me, and came while it was still daylight and gave me a chance to shoot her, all would be well; on the other hand, if she came and did not give me a shot, some of us would not reach camp for we had nearly two miles to go and the path the whole way ran through heavy jungle, and was bordered in some places by big rocks, and in others by dense bushes. It was useless to consult the men, for none of them had ever been in a jungle before coming on this trip, so the decision would have to be mine.

I decided to try to call up the tigress.

Handing my rifle over to one of the men, I waited until the tigress called again and, making a cup with my hands round my mouth and filling my lungs to their utmost limit, sent an answering call over the valley. Back came her call, and after that, for several minutes, call answered call. She would come, had in fact already started, and if she arrived while there was light to shoot by, all the advantages would be on my side, for I had the selecting of the ground on which it would best suit me to meet her. November is the mating season for tigers and it was evident that for the past forty-eight hours she had been raging through the jungles in search of a mate, and that now, on hearing what she thought was a tiger answering her mating call, she would lose no time in joining him.

Four hundred yards down the ridge the path runs for fifty yards across a flat bit of ground. At the far right-hand side of this flat ground the path goes round the edge of a big rock and then drops steeply, and continues in a series of sharp bends, down to the next bench. It was at this rock I decided to meet the tigress, and on my way

down to it I called several times to let her know I was changing my position, and also to keep in touch with her.

I want you now to have a clear picture of the ground in your mind, to enable you to follow the events that followed. Imagine then a rectangular piece of ground forty yards wide and eighty yards long, ending in a more or less perpendicular rock face. The path coming down from Thak runs on to this ground at its short or south end, and after continuing down the centre for twenty-five yards bends to the right and leaves the rectangle on its longer east side. At the point where the path leaves the flat ground there is a rock about four feet high. From a little beyond where the path bends to the right, a ridge of rock, three or four feet high, rises and extends to the north side of the rectangle, where the ground falls away in a perpendicular rock face. On the near or path side of this low ridge there is a dense line of bushes approaching to within ten feet of the four-foot-high rock I have mentioned. The rest of the rectangle is grown over with trees, scattered bushes, and short grass.

It was my intention to lie on the path by the side of the rock and shoot the tigress as she approached me, but when I tried this position I found it would not be possible for me to see her until she was within two or three yards, and further, that she could get at me either round the rock or through the scattered bushes on my left without my seeing her at all. Projecting out of the rock, from the side opposite to that from which I expected the tigress to approach, there was a narrow shelf. By sitting sideways I found I could get a little of my bottom on the shelf, and by putting my left hand flat on the top of the rounded rock and stretching out my right leg to its full extent and touching

the ground with my toes, retain my position on it. The men and goats I placed directly behind, and ten to twelve feet below me.

The stage was now set for receiving the tigress, who while these preparations were being made had approached to within three hundred yards. Sending out one final call to give her direction, I looked round to see if my men were all right.

The spectacle these men presented would under other circumstances have been so absurd as to make one laugh but here it was tragic. Sitting in a tight little circle with their knees drawn up and their heads together, with the goats trying to crawl under them, they had that look of intense expectation on their screwed-up features that one sees on the faces of spectators waiting to hear a big gun go off. From the time we had first heard the tigress from the ridge, neither the men nor the goats had made a sound, beyond one suppressed cough. They were probably by now frozen with fear—which they had every right to be—and even if they were, I take my hat off to those four men, who had the courage to do what I, had I been in their position, would not have dreamt of doing. For seven days they had been hearing the most exaggerated and terrifying tales of this dreadful beast that had kept them awake the past two nights, and now, while darkness was coming on, and sitting unarmed in a position where they could see nothing, they were listening to the man-eater coming nearer and nearer; greater courage, and greater faith, it is not possible to conceive.

The fact that I could not hold my rifle a DB 450/400, with my left hand (which I was using to retain my unsteady seat on the ledge) was causing me some worry, for apart

from the fear of the rifle slipping on the rounded top of the rock—I had folded my handkerchief and placed the rifle on it to try to prevent this—I did not know what would be the effect of the recoil of a high velocity rifle fired in this position. The rifle was pointing along the path, in which there was a hump, and it was my intention to fire into the tigress's face immediately it appeared over this hump, which was twenty feet from the rock.

The tigress however did not keep to the line of the hill, which would have brought her out on the path a little beyond the hump, but crossed a deep ravine and came straight towards where she had heard my last call, at an angle which I can best describe as one o'clock. This course put the low ridge of rock, over which I could not see, between us. She had located the direction of my last call with great accuracy, but had judged the distance wrongly, and not finding her prospective mate at the spot she had expected him to be, she was now working herself up into a perfect fury, and you will have some idea of what the fury of a tigress in her condition can be when I tell you that not many miles from my home a tigress on one occasion closed a public road for a whole week, attacking everything that attempted to go along it, including a string of camels, until she was finally joined by a mate.

I know of no sound more liable to get on one's nerves than the calling of an unseen tiger at close range. What effect this terrifying sound was having on my men I was frightened to think and if they had gone screaming down the hill I should not have been at all surprised, for even though I had the heel of a good rifle to my shoulder and the stock against my cheek I felt like screaming myself.

But even more frightening than this continuous calling was the fading out of the light. Another few seconds, ten or fifteen at the most, and it would be too dark to see my sights and we should then be at the mercy of a man-eater, plus a tigress wanting a mate. Something would have to be done, and done in a hurry if we were not to be butchered, and the only thing I could think of was to call.

The tigress was now so close that I could hear her drawing in her breath each time before she called, and as she again filled her lungs, I did the same with mine and we called at exactly the same moment. The effect was startlingly immediate. Without a second's hesitation she came tramping with quick steps through the dead leaves, over the low ridge and into the bushes a little to my right front, and just as I was expecting her to walk right on top of me she stopped, and the next moment the full blast of her deep throated call struck me in the face and would have carried the hat off my head had I been wearing one. A second's pause, then again quick steps, a glimpse of her as she passed between two bushes, and then she stepped right out into the open, and, looking into my face, stopped dead.

By great and unexpected good luck the half-dozen steps the tigress took to her right front carried her almost to the exact spot at which my rifle was pointing. Had she continued in the direction in which she was coming before her last call, my story—if written—would have had a different ending, for it would have been as impossible to turn the rifle on the rounded top of the rock as it would have been to lift and fire it with one hand.

Owing to the nearness of the tigress, and the fading light, all that I could see of her was her head. My first bullet caught her under the right eye and the second, fired more by accident than intentionally, took her in the throat and she came to rest with her nose against the rock. The recoil from the right barrel loosened my hold on the rock and knocked me off the shelf of rock, and the recoil from the left barrel, fired while I was in the air, brought the rifle up in violent contact with my jaw and sent me heels over head right on top of the men and goats. Once again I take my hat off to those four men for, not knowing that the tigress might not be going to land on them next, they caught me as I fell and saved me from injury and my rifle from being broken.

When I had freed myself from the tangle of human and goat legs I took the 275 rifle from the man who was holding it, pressed a clip of cartridges into the magazine and sent a stream of five bullets singing over the valley and across the Sarda into Nepal. Two shots, to the thousands of men in the valley and in the surrounding villages who were anxiously listening for the sound of my rifle, might mean anything, but two shots followed by five more, spaced at regular intervals of five seconds, could only be understood as conveying one message, and that was, that the man-eater was dead.

I had not spoken to my men from the time we had first heard the tigress from the ridge. On my telling them now that she was dead and that there was no longer any reason for us to be afraid, they did not appear to be able to grasp what I was saying, so I told them to go up and have a look while I found and lit a cigarette. Very cautiously

they climbed up to the rock, but went no further for, as I have told you, the tigress was touching the other side of it. In camp late that night while sitting round a camp-fire and telling their experiences to group after group of eager listeners, their narrative always ended up with, 'and then the tiger whose roaring had turned our livers into water hit the sahib on the head and knocked him down on top of us, and if you don't believe us, go and look at his face.' A mirror is an unnecessary luxury in camp and even if I had had one, it could not have made the swelling on my jaw, which put me on a milk diet for several days, look as large and as painful as it felt.

—*Jim Corbett*

THE SUMMIT

AS my ice-axe bit into the first steep slope of the ridge, my highest hopes were realized. The snow was crystalline and firm. Two or three rythmical blows of the ice-axe produced a step large enough even for our oversized High Altitude boots and, the most encouraging feature of all, a firm thrust of the ice-axe would sink it half-way up the shaft, giving a solid and comfortable belay. We moved one at a time. I realized that our margin of safety at this altitude was not great and that we must take every care and precaution. I would cut a forty-foot line of steps, Tenzing belaying me while I worked. Then in turn I would sink my shaft and put a few loops of the rope around it and Tenzing, protected against a breaking step, would move up to me. Then once again as he belayed me I would go on cutting. In a number of places the overhanging ice cornices

were very large indeed and in order to escape them I cut a line of steps down to where the snow met the rocks on the west. It was a great thrill to look straight down this enormous rock face and to see, 8,000 feet below us, the tiny tents of Camp IV in the Western Cwm. Scrambling on the rocks and cutting handholds in the snow, we were able to shuffle past these difficult portions.

On one of these occasions I noted that Tenzing, who had been going quite well, had suddenly slowed up considerably and seemed to be breathing with difficulty. The Sherpas had little idea of the workings of an oxygen set and from past experience I immediately suspected his oxygen supply. I noticed that hanging from the exhaust tube of his oxygen mask were icicles, and on closer examination found that this tube, some two inches in diameter, was completely blocked with ice. I was able to clear it out and gave him much-needed relief. On checking my own set I found that the same thing was occurring though it had not reached the stage to have caused me any discomfort. From then on I kept a much closer check on this problem.

The weather for Everest seemed practically perfect. Insulated as we were in all our down clothing and wind-proofs, we suffered no discomfort from cold or wind. However, on one occasion I removed my sunglasses to examine more closely a difficult section of the ridge but was very soon blinded by the fine snow driven by the bitter wind and hastily replaced them. I went on cutting steps. To my surprise I was enjoying the climb as much as I had ever enjoyed a fine ridge in my own New Zealand Alps.

After an hour's steady going we reached the foot of the most formidable-looking problem on the ridge—a

rock step some forty feet high. We had known of the existence of this step from aerial photographs and had also seen it through our binoculars from Thyangboche. We realized that at this altitude it might well spell the difference between success and failure. The rock itself, smooth and almost holdless, might have been an interesting Sunday afternoon problem to a group of expert rock climbers in the Lake District, but here it was a barrier beyond our feeble strength to overcome. I could see no way of turning it on the steep rock bluff on the west, but fortunately another possibility of tackling it still remained. On its east side was another great cornice, and running up the full forty feet of the step was a narrow crack between the cornice and the rock. Leaving Tenzing to belay me as best he could, I jammed my way into this crack, then kicking backwards with my crampons I sank their spikes deep into the frozen snow behind me and levered myself off the ground. Taking advantage of every little rock hold and all the force of knee, shoulder and arms I could muster, I literally cramponed backwards up the crack, with a fervent prayer that the cornice would remain attached to the rock. Despite the considerable effort involved, my progress although slow was steady, and as Tenzing paid out the rope I inched my way upwards until I could finally reach over the top of the rock and drag myself out of the crack on to a wide ledge. For a few moments I lay regaining my breath and for the first time really felt the fierce determination that nothing now could stop us reaching the top. I took a firm stance on the ledge and signalled to Tenzing to come on up. As I heaved hard on the rope Tenzing wriggled his way up the crack and finally collapsed exhausted at the top like a giant fish when it has just been hauled from the sea after a terrible struggle.

I checked both our oxygen sets and roughly calculated our flow rates. Everything seemed to be going well. Probably owing to the strain imposed on him by the trouble with his oxygen set, Tenzing had been moving rather slowly but he was climbing safely, and this was the major consideration. His only comment on my enquiring of his condition was to smile and wave along the ridge. We were going so well at 3 litres per minute that I was determined now if necessary to cut down our flow rate to 2 litres per minute if the extra endurance was required.

The ridge continued as before. Giant cornices on the right, steep rock slopes on the left. I went on cutting steps on the narrow strip of snow. The ridge curved away to the right and we had no idea where the top was. As I cut around the back of one hump, another higher one would swing into view. Time was passing and the ridge seemed never-ending. In one place, where the angle of the ridge had eased off, I tried cramponing without cutting steps, hoping this would save time but I quickly realized that our margin of safety on these steep slopes at this altitude was too small, so I went on step-cutting. I was beginning to tire a little now. I had been cutting steps continuously for two hours, and Tenzing, too, was moving very slowly. As I chipped steps around still another corner, I wondered rather duly just how long we could keep it up. Our original zest had now quite gone and it was turning more into a grim struggle. I then realized that the ridge ahead, instead of still monotonously rising, now dropped sharply away, and far below I could see the North Col and the Rongbuk glacier. I looked upwards to see a narrow snow ridge running up to a snowy summit. A few more whacks of the ice-axe in the firm snow and we stood on top.

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heating the metal. The metallurgical skill of ancient India is further attested by the fact that this pillar, though it has weathered the torrential rains of over 1,500 monsoons, shows no sign of rusting. This is not due to the fact that the Indians had discovered some form of stainless steel alloy, for the column is of iron almost chemically pure. Several suggestions have been put forward to account for the remarkable durability of the Iron Pillar, but no wholly satisfactory explanation has been given. The theory, confidently proposed in a Scientific Journal,²⁷ that the dry atmosphere of Delhi is a sufficient cause is quite inadequate, for Delhi is very humid during the rainy season, when ordinary iron quickly rusts. Since the process of oxidization demands a catalyst, it may be the great purity of the metal which has preserved the Iron Pillar so long, as another memorial to India's technical skill.

An Extract from "THE WONDER THAT WAS INDIA"
—A. L. Basham

OUR HERITAGE—II

"If I were asked", Pandit Nehru has said, "what is the greatest treasure which India possesses and what is her finest heritage, I would answer unhesitatingly that it is the Sanskrit language and literature and all that it contains."

This is indeed true. Because, if we think of the wonderful thoughts which our ancestors put down in the early books, at a time when the people of Europe were in their infancy, we can be justly proud of our heritage.

What is this heritage?

It is in the lovely lyric poetry of the Vedas. It is in the wise sayings of the Upanishads. It is in the grand sweep of the epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata. It is in the portrayal of emotion and mood and character in the classical drama of Kalidasa, Bana, Harsha and Sudraka. All these taught our ancestors how to live.

The early poems in the Rig Veda are rather simple. It seems that the tribes who sang them came face to face with the dread powers of nature, storms, high mountains, fire, and dense jungles full of trees. They thought that each of these things had a spirit behind it. So they imagined all kinds of Gods, like Rudra, the god of storm, Indra, the god of rain, Agni, the god of fire, Surya the sun-god. And they involved all the gods to help them to grow good harvests, and they offered prayers and sacrifices to the spirits. Later, in the Rig Veda, and in the Sama, Yajur and Atharva Vedas, they began to ask more profound questions. Life was becoming complex and many difficulties arose. So they tried to solve these difficulties by making guesses and thinking, solving what is called the riddle of existence. You might remember that the 'Hymn of Creation' goes very far in probing the mystery of life in this Universe.

In the Upanishads, we find that the tribes have settled down in villages and arranged their relations with each other. So they seek to sort out their relations with the gods. And, after much discussion the idea of a single supreme God emerges. He is the God of all the other gods. And the world is explained in this way. There was once One Supreme God, Brahman. In him arose the desire to create many things. So the whole Universe,

My initial feelings were of relief—relief that there were no more steps to cut—no more ridges to traverse and no more humps to tantalize us with hopes of success. I looked at Tenzing and in spite of the balaclava, goggles and oxygen mask all encrusted with long icicles that concealed his face, there was no disguising his infectious grin of pure delight as he looked all around him. We shook hands and then Tenzing threw his arm around my shoulders and we thumped each other on the back until we were almost breathless. It was 11.30 a. m. The ridge had taken us two and a half hours, but it seemed like a lifetime. I turned off the oxygen and removed my set. I had carried my camera, loaded with colour film, inside my shirt to keep it warm, so I now produced it and got Tenzing to pose on top for me, waving his axe on which was a string of flags—United Nations, British, Nepalese and Indian. Then I turned my attention to the great stretch of country lying below us in every direction.

From THE ASCENT OF EVEREST by SIR JOHN HUNT
—Edmund Hillary

SPACE TRAVEL

DURING recent years Man has succeeded in doing a number of things which not very long ago were thought to be impossible. He has climbed to the top of Mount Everest, he has run a mile in less than four minutes, he has flown faster than sound and he has descended to the depths of the ocean. These things have become possible because Man has discovered in recent years a great deal more about his own powers and about the world of Nature than he ever knew before. As a consequence, he learned to do the apparently impossible.

A great deal of the success achieved in these different fields is due to the investigations of scientists, who have discovered new scientific facts and processes which have changed our ideas about what is in fact possible. At the same time some of the success is due to the courage of men who have explored the limits of the human body's resistance and have taken risks that only a few years ago would have seemed ridiculous:

The idea of space travel has attracted a great many scientists ever since Man conquered the air. Just as Everest represented a challenge to Man's power of endurance, so outer space represents a challenge to Man's ingenuity. The first object of exploring space is to investigate the nature of the upper air, beyond the upper air and to learn more about the cosmic rays given off by the sun. It is difficult to examine these rays on the earth's surface because their effect is reduced by clouds and the layer of air which covers the earth. For this purpose, rockets essentially similar to those which we enjoy shooting up into the air at the times of celebration, are already being sent into the upper air, conveying scientific instruments, such as cameras, which detach themselves from the rocket after a certain time and fall back to the earth by means of a parachute. These instruments are packed in a container bearing the address of a laboratory and a request to anybody finding it to return it to the address given.

Another object of the exploration of space is to send a rocket to the moon. The moon, which is a mountainous uninhabited body of volcanic rock moving round the earth at a distance of about 238,000 miles, is without air, vegetation, or life of any kind. Because of the force of gravity

exercised by the earth, a rocket would need to travel at a speed of 25,000 miles an hour, which would enable it to free itself from this gravitational pull. Once free, it would travel without the necessity for any more power, since it would not have to fight against gravity nor against the pressure of air. When the rocket would hit the moon it would explode and scatter a large quantity of white powder contained in it over a considerable area, so that observers on the earth could see whether their efforts had been successful or not. Since the moon is a moving object, the rocket would have to be fired ahead of it several hours before the moon reached the position at which it was calculated the two would meet. The principal difficulties still to be overcome are those of finding metals for the body of the rocket which will resist the enormously high temperatures produced by its passage through the air and of finding suitable fuels to drive the rocket. Once it is proved possible to send such rockets to the moon, the next step will be to send others with human crews which will travel round the moon before returning to the earth.

You must have read in the newspapers about the earth satellites sent into space by Russian and American scientists. Leaving the earth at enormous speed, these travel rapidly to a point about 600 miles about the earth's surface when a change in the direction of the rocket's force causes it to fly at a speed of 18,000 miles an hour parallel to the earth's surface. The engines are then switched off, but the rocket continues to fly at the same speed because of the absence of friction and pressure from the air.

One of the Russian satellites, the first, carried a dog, but the others have carried only automatic recording instruments for sending messages back to the earth.

It may prove possible later to send further rockets with human crews, and these would prove enormously useful. They would be able to explore space with telescopes, whose usefulness on the earth is so often reduced by clouds and dust; they would be able to gather useful information about the weather on the earth; they would be able to investigate the mysteries of radio transmission. Nobody would ever fall off a space station, since the people on it would be free of the force of gravity.

Of course, there are many problems to overcome before these ideas become reality, but it may not be long now before we open our newspaper and read that the first space station has been established and that the next step in Man's conquest of space has been taken.

—J. G. Bruton

NARAYAN HEMCHANDRA

JUST about this time Narayan Hemchandra came to England. I had heard of him as a writer. We met at the house of Miss Manning of the National Indian Association. Miss Manning knew that I could not make myself sociable. When I went to her place I used to sit tongue-tied, never speaking except when spoken to. She introduced me to Narayan Hemchandra. He did not know English. His dress was queer—a clumsy pair of trousers, a wrinkled, dirty, brown coat after the Parsi fashion, no necktie or collar, and a tasselled woollen cap. He grew a long beard.

He was lightly built and short of stature. His round face was scarred with smallpox, and had a nose which was

neither pointed nor blunt. With his hand he was constantly turning over his beard.

Such a queer-looking and queerly dressed person was bound to be singled out in fashionable society.

'I have heard a good deal about you,' I said to him. 'I have also read some of your writings. I should be very pleased if you were kind enough to come to my place.'

Narayan Hemchandra had a rather hoarse voice. With a smile on his face he replied :

'Yes, where do you stay ?'

'In Store Street.'

'Then we are neighbours. I want to learn English. Will you teach me ?'

'I shall be happy to teach you anything I can, and will try my best. If you like, I will go to your place.'

'Oh, no. I shall come to you. I shall also bring with me a Translation Exercise Book.' So we made an appointment. Soon we were close friends.

Narayan Hemchandra was innocent of grammar. 'Horse' was a verb with him and 'run' a noun. I remember many such funny instances. But he was not to be baffled by his ignorance. My little knowledge of grammar could make no impression on him. Certainly he never regarded his ignorance of grammar as a matter for shame.

With perfect nonchalance he said : 'I have never been to school like you. I have never felt the need of grammar in expressing my thoughts. Well, do you know Bengali ?

I know it. I have travelled in Bengal. It is I who have given Maharshi Devendranath Tagore's works to the Gujarati-speaking world. And I wish to translate into Gujarati the treasures of many other languages. And you know I am never literal in my translations. I always content myself with bringing out the spirit. Others, with their better knowledge, may be able to do more in future. But I am quite satisfied with what I have achieved without the help of grammar. I know Marathi, Hindi, Bengali, and now I have begun to know English. What I want is a copious vocabulary. And do you think my ambition ends here ? No fear. I want to go to France and learn French. I am told that language has an extensive literature. I shall go to Germany also, if possible, and there learn German.' And thus he would talk on unceasingly. He had a boundless ambition for learning languages and for foreign travel.

'Then will you go to America also ?'

'Certainly. How can I return to India without having seen the New World ?'

'But where will you find the money ?'

'What do I need money for ? I am not a fashionable fellow like you. The minimum amount of food and the minimum amount of clothing suffice for me. And for this what little I get out of my books and from my friends is enough. I always travel third class. While going to America also I shall travel on deck.'

Narayan Hemchandra's simplicity was all his own, and his frankness was on a par with it. Of pride he had not the slightest trace, excepting, of course, a rather undue regard for his own capacity as a writer.

We met daily. There was a considerable amount of similarity between our thoughts and actions. Both of us were vegetarians. We would often have our lunch together. This was the time when I lived on 17s. a week and cooked for myself. Sometimes I would go to his room, and sometimes he would come to mine. I cooked in the English style. Nothing but Indian style would satisfy him. He would not do without dal. I would make soup of carrots, etc., and he would pity me for my taste. Once he somehow hunted out mung (an Indian pulse), cooked it and brought it to my place. I ate it with delight. This led on to a regular system of exchange between us. I would take my delicacies to him and he would bring his to me.

Cardinal Manning's name was then on every lip. The dock labourers' strike had come to an early termination owing to the efforts of John Burns and Cardinal Manning. I told Narayan Hemchandra of Disraeli's tribute to the Cardinal's simplicity. 'Then I must see the sage,' said he.

'He is a big man. How do you expect to meet him ?'

'Why ? I know how. I must get you to write to him in my name. Tell him I am an author and that I want to congratulate him personally on his humanitarian work, and also say that I shall have to take you as interpreter as I do not know English.'

I wrote a letter to that effect. In two or three days came Cardinal Manning's card in reply giving us an appointment. So we both called on the Cardinal. I put on the usual visiting suit. Narayan Hemchandra was the same as ever, in the same coat and the same trousers. I tried to make fun of this, but he laughed me out and said :

'You civilized fellows are all cowards. Great men never look at a person's exterior. They think of his heart.'

We entered the Cardinal's mansion. As soon as we were seated a thin, tall, old gentleman made his appearance, and shook hands with us. Narayan Hemchandra thus gave his greetings :

'I do not want to take up your time. I had heard a lot about you and I felt I should come and thank you for the good work you have done for the strikers. It has been my custom to visit the sages of the world and that is why I have put you to this trouble.'

This was of course my translation of what he spoke in Gujarati.

'I am glad you have come. I hope your stay in London will agree with you and that you will get in touch with people here. God bless you.'

With these words the Cardinal stood up and said good-bye.

Once Narayan Hemchandra came to my place in a shirt and dhoti. The good landlady opened the door, came running to me in a fright—this was a new landlady who did not know Narayan Hemchandra—and said : 'A sort of a madcap wants to see you.' I went to the door and to my surprise found Narayan Hemchandra. I was shocked. His face, however, showed nothing but his usual smile.

'But did not the children in the street rag you ?'

'Well, they ran after me, but I did not mind them and they were quiet.'

Narayan Hemchandra went to Paris after a few months' stay in London. He began studying French and also translating French books. I knew enough French to revise his translation, so he gave it to me to read. It was not a translation, it was the substance.

Finally, he carried out his determination to visit America. It was with great difficulty that he succeeded in securing a deck ticket. While in the United States he was prosecuted for 'being indecently dressed', as he once went out in a shirt and dhoti. I have a recollection that he was discharged.

From THE STORY OF MY EXPERIMENTS WITH TRUTH
—M. K. Gandhi

JENNER, THE CONQUEROR OF SMALLPOX

EDWARD JENNER, the son of a Gloucestershire clergyman, was born in the year 1749. As a young man he was apprenticed to a surgeon in Sodbury, but after a time he went to London and studied under the celebrated John Hunter. Finally he returned to his native town of Berkeley, where he practised the arts of medicine and surgery till his death in 1823.

Everybody liked Dr. Jenner. He was kind-hearted, cheerful, fond of music, fond of poetry, and keenly interested in his noble profession.

When Dr. Jenner was studying at Sodbury a young countrywoman came to him for advice. While talking to her he chanced to speak of smallpox, that terrible disease which swept over the land every few years. The young woman said she could not catch smallpox because she had had

cowpox. This was a new idea to Dr. Jenner, but she declared it was true. She told him that everybody in her neighbourhood had proved this to be true. Every milker of cows, she said, who had ever caught a certain infection from the cow's udder was after that absolutely safe from smallpox. Dr. Jenner asked other physicians about it, but they said it was not a proven fact. Some said it was only a foolish notion of ignorant people. Jenner, however, thought it reasonable and he began to investigate cowpox. He found that persons who had had cowpox were so certain they were safe from smallpox that they allowed him to expose them to that disease, to prove it. They did not catch it.

Jenner then conceived the idea of spreading cowpox, which is a harmless disease, in order to ward off the dangerous smallpox. He said, "If a man catch the cowpox, from a cow, why may not one person get it from another person?" He took the poisonous germs from the cow and planted them under the skin of his patients and gave them cowpox; after which they were immune from the dreadful smallpox.

Next he took the germs from a person who was ill with the cowpox and gave the milder disease to others. He had solved the problem of vaccination, which is merely spreading cowpox by inoculation in order to prevent smallpox. He proved it by testing a healthy boy aged eight. The lad was inoculated with cowpox from the hands of a milkmaid and contracted cowpox. Jenner then inoculated the boy with smallpox and he did not catch the disease.

Jenner was now certain of his ground. He therefore published his new discovery to the world. In the following

year thirty-three physicians and forty eminent surgeons signed a statement that they believed in the new discovery of Jenner. The king and Royal Family of England bestowed great attention upon him, and the new practice of vaccination began. Parliament voted him two grants of money one of £10,000 and one of £20,000.

In six years news of the discovery had reached the most remote corners of all civilized lands, and the happy tidings were even made known among some of the savage nations. Soon smallpox ceased to be the most dreaded of all diseases.

Vaccination gave such relief from the fear of the dreaded scourge that clergymen in Geneva and Holland praised it from their pulpits. In some places there would be long lines of people waiting their turn to be vaccinated. Jenner's birthday was celebrated as a feast-day in Germany, and the first child vaccinated in Russia was named "Vaccinov", and was educated at public expense.

Honours were showered upon Jenner from the Old and the New World. On one occasion he requested Napoleon, who hated the English bitterly, to release a certain Englishman held a prisoner in France. The Emperor was about to refuse, when the name of Jenner was mentioned. "Oh", said Napoleon, "we can refuse nothing to him".

India has always been a land where smallpox raged. During the Great War, when diseases threatened all nations, nine million people in India were vaccinated without a single resulting death. Other millions were vaccinated in the Philippine Islands, and there also smallpox disappeared. Vaccination is now used to prevent other diseases, and

the name of Jenner will always be held in grateful remembrance.

*From MEN OF SCIENCE AND THEIR DISCOVERIES,
CHAPTER XVIII, JENNER, THE CONQUEROR
OF SMALLPOX*

—William & Stella Nida

THE END OF FEAR

NOT for a few years of excitement and agony and suspense, but for long generations our people had offered their "blood, toil, sweat and tears". And this process had eaten its way deep into the body and soul of India, poisoning every aspect of our corporate life, like that fell disease which consumes the tissues of the lungs and kills slowly but inevitably. Sometimes we thought that some swifter and more obvious process, resembling cholera or the bubonic plague, would have been better. But that was a passing thought, for adventurism leads nowhere, and the quack treatment of deep-seated diseases does not yield results.

And then Gandhiji came. He was like a powerful current of fresh air that made us stretch ourselves and take deep breaths, like a beam of light that pierced the darkness and removed the scales from our eyes, like a whirlwind that upset many things but most of all the working of people's minds. He did not descend from the top; he seemed to emerge from the millions of India, speaking their language and incessantly drawing attention to them and their appalling condition. Get off the backs of these peasants and workers, he told us, all you who live by their exploitation; get rid of the system that produces this poverty and misery.

Political freedom took new shape then and acquired a new content. Much that he said we only partially accepted

or sometimes did not accept at all. But all this was secondary. The essence of his teaching was fearlessness and truth and action allied to these, always keeping the welfare of the masses in view. The greatest gift for an individual or a nation, so we had been told in our ancient books, was abhaya, fearlessness, not merely bodily courage but the absence of fear from the mind. Chanakya and Yagnavalkya had said, at the dawn of our history, that it was the function of the leaders of a people to make them fearless. But the dominant impulse in India under British rule was that of fear, pervasive, oppressing, strangling fear; fear of the army, the police, the widespread secret service; fear of the official class; fear of laws meant to suppress and of prison; fear of the landlord's agent; fear of the money-lender; fear of unemployment and starvation, which were always on the threshold. It was against this all-pervading fear that Gandhiji's quiet and determined voice was raised. Be not afraid.

Was it so simple as all that? Not quite. And yet fear builds its phantoms which are more fearsome than reality itself, and reality, when calmly analyzed and its consequences willingly accepted, losses much of its terror.

So, suddenly, as it were, that black pall of fear was lifted from the people's shoulders, not wholly, of course, but to an amazing degree. As fear is close companion to falsehood, so truth follows fearlessness. The Indian people did not become much more truthful than they were, nor did they change their essential nature overnight, nevertheless a sea-change was visible as the need for falsehood and furtive behaviour lessened. It was a psychological change, almost as if some expert in psychoanalytical method had probed deep into the patient's past, found out the origins

of his complexes, exposed them to his view, and thus rid him of that burden.

There was that psychological reaction also, a feeling of shame at our long submission to an alien rule that had degraded and humiliated us, and a desire to submit no longer, whatever the consequences might be. We did not grow much more truthful, perhaps, than we had been previously, but Gandhiji was always there as a symbol of uncompromising truth to pull us up and shame us into truth.

What is truth ? I do not know for certain, and perhaps our truths are relative and absolute truth is beyond us. Different persons may and do take different views of truth, and each individual is powerfully influenced by his own background, training, and impulses. So also Gandhiji. But truth is at least for an individual what he himself feels and knows to be true. According to that definition I do not know of any person who holds to the truth as Gandhiji does.

An Extract from "MAHATMA GANDHI"

—Jawaharlal Nehru

MY SCHOOL

I STARTED a school in Bengal when I was nearing forty. Certainly this was never expected of me, who had spent the greater portion of my life in writing, chiefly verses. Therefore people naturally thought that as a school it might not be one of the best of its kind, but it was sure to be something outrageously new, being the product of daring inexperience.

This is one of the reasons why I am often asked what is the idea upon which my school is based. The question

is a very embarrassing one for me, because to satisfy the expectation of my questioners I cannot afford to be commonplace in my answer. However, I shall resist the temptation to be original and shall be content with being merely truthful.

In the first place, I must confess it is difficult for me to say what is the idea which underlies my institution. For the idea is not like a fixed foundation upon which a building is erected. It is more like a seed which cannot be separated and pointed out directly it begins to grow into a plant.

And I know what it was to which this school owes its origin. It was not any new theory of education, but the memory of my school-days.

That those days were unhappy ones for me I cannot altogether ascribe to my peculiar temperament or to any special demerit of the schools to which I was sent. It may be that if I had been a little less sensitive, I could gradually have accommodated myself to the pressure and survived long enough to earn my university degrees. But all the same schools are schools, though some are better and some worse, according to their own standard.

The provision has been made for infants to be fed upon their mother's milk. They find their food and their mother at the same time. It is complete nourishment for them, body and soul. It is their first introduction to the great truth that man's true relationship with the world is that of personal love and not that of the mechanical law of causation.

Therefore our childhood should be given its full measure of life's draught, for which it has an endless thirst.

The young mind should be saturated with the idea that it has been born in a human world which is in harmony with the world around it. And this is what our regular type of school ignores with an air of superior wisdom, severe and disdainful. It forcibly snatches away children from a world full of the mystery of God's own handiwork, full of the suggestiveness of personality. It is a mere method of discipline which refuses to take into account the individual. It is a manufactory specially designed for grinding out uniform results. It follows an imaginary straight line of the average in digging its channel of education. But life's line is not the straight line, for it is fond of playing the see-saw with the line of the average, bringing upon its head the rebuke of the school. For according to the school, life is perfect when it allows itself to be treated as dead, to be cut into symmetrical conveniences. And this was the cause of my suffering when I was sent to school. For all of a sudden I found my world vanishing from around me, giving place to wooden benches and straight walls staring at me with the blank stare of the blind. I was not a creation of the schoolmaster,—the Government Board of Education was not consulted when I took birth in the world. But was that any reason why they should wreak their vengeance upon me for this oversight of my creator ?

But the legend is that eating of the fruit of knowledge is not consonant with dwelling in paradise. Therefore men's children have to be banished from their paradise into a realm of death, dominated by the decency of a tailoring department. So my mind had to accept the tight-fitting encasement of the school which, being like the shoes of a mandarin woman, pinched and bruised my nature on

all sides and at every movement. I was fortunate enough in extricating myself before insensibility set in.

Though I did not have to serve the full penal term which men of my position have to undergo to find their entrance into cultured society, I am glad that I did not altogether escape from its molestation. For it has given me knowledge of the wrong from which the children of men suffer.

The cause of it is this, that man's intention is going against God's intention as to how children should grow into knowledge. How we should conduct our business is our own affair, and therefore in our offices we are free to create in the measure of our special purposes. But such office arrangement does not suit God's creation. And children are God's own creation.

We have come to this world to accept it, not merely to know it. We may become powerful by knowledge, but we attain fullness by sympathy. The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence. But we find that this education of sympathy is not only systematically ignored in schools, but it is severely repressed. From our very childhood habits are formed and knowledge is imparted in such a manner that our life is weaned away from nature and our mind and the world are set in opposition from the beginning of our days. Thus the greatest of educations for which we came prepared is neglected, and we are made to lose our world to find a bagful of information instead. We rob the child of his earth to teach him geography, of language to teach him grammar. His hunger is for the Epic, but he is supplied with chronicles of facts and dates. He was born in the human world, but is banished into the

world of living gramophones, to expiate for the original sin of being born in ignorance. Child-nature protests against such calamity with all its power of suffering, subdued at last into silence by punishment.

—Rabindranath Tagore

GOOD MANNERS

THERE was once a young man who was strong and healthy and enjoyed his work. One day he got an attack of influenza. He had had it before and paid little attention to it, but this time he developed pneumonia and was dangerously ill. When he recovered he could only move slowly. He was easily tired and life became a burden to him. When he was well enough to go to work he found the journey home very trying. He looked at the strong young men sitting comfortably in the train or bus, and then, feeling tired himself, noticed how tired some of the older people were who were standing beside him. Gradually he got strong again, but when he was in a train or bus he now looked round to see if there was any older person in need of a seat, and if there was, he gave up his. 'I've got my strength back now,' he said to himself, 'these older people will never have their strength again.'

When you are cycling and see an old man hesitating on a crossing, don't call him an old fool. He may not hear very well, or he may not see clearly, or he may have become giddy with walking. Perhaps he was a famous soldier in the War and his wounds are still painful, or perhaps he has an artificial leg. One day you may go to a war and be severely injured. What will you think if schoolboys make fun of you because you can only move slowly ?

the anger of mysterious powers to stop the eruption, or blame the plague on the sins of their enemies or on the plotting of witchcraft.

These are examples of the fact that the advance of science necessarily changes our general ideas. We will mention one or two other examples. The advance of astronomical science has entirely changed our views as to the place of man in nature. Before the time of Copernicus it was universally believed that the universe was quite a small thing, that the earth was its centre, that the sun and moon existed to give light to our world, and that they and the stars travelled round the earth. Since then, there have been many changes in our ideas until now we know that the earth travels round the sun; that the sun is only one of millions of stars, which are scattered in space at distances of millions of millions of miles; that all the stars we see make up only a single star-family, and that there are millions of other similar star-families swimming in space at almost inconceivable distances, but visible through our telescopes as spiral nebulae. We can no longer think of man or his home as in any way central, or as being anything but very insignificant compared with the universe as a whole.....

There are many other ways in which scientific knowledge has changed general ideas—for instance about heredity, and disasters like earthquakes, and disease, and the religious beliefs of primitive peoples—but we have not space to go into them here. When studying history it is a good exercise to try to trace the effects of scientific advance on the ideas prevalent in different periods.

—E. N. Da c. Andrade and Julian Huxley

'Mr.

MY FIRST AEROPLANES

man is I go into a re the first to be tried in aeroplanes, dollars. ous; the littl;avy to be of any real use. One such

I ro; the sight of , consisted of a large number of wings A l nakes mother and was driven by a steam engine. It is

A l have risen for a moment off the ground. Another s, but fell and was damaged. It was not until the petrol engine, which is very light for the power it develops, was fitted to a machine that any real success was obtained.

On December 17, 1903, Orville Wright, an American, flew safely in a heavier-than-air machine for twelve seconds. He and his brother Wilbur had made a lot of experiments and had taken immense trouble to study the art of flying in gliders' before they attempted to fly their aeroplane. Orville came down safely after the first short flight, and on the same day the experiment was repeated three times. The longest of these flights covered a distance of 852 feet and lasted 59 seconds. The machine which was used had an engine developing only sixteen horse-power, but the aeroplane reached a speed of 35 miles an hour. The two brothers continued their experiments after their first success, and in 1908 Wilbur gave some exhibitions of flying in France which astonished all who saw them.

The Wright brothers laid the foundation of modern flying. Soon others followed in their footsteps. Louis Bleriot, a Frenchman, flew across the English Channel from Calais to Dover in 1909. Prizes were offered for flights from one place to another. Competition increased. The aeroplane improved more and more as its behaviour became better understood. More powerful engines were developed. In 1919 Sir John Alcock and Sir Arthur Brown

One of the things all boys and girls are going to learn before very long is that they are fragile little things in a dangerous world. Your parents and your teachers and all older people have had some severe blows already. They get more severe blows every year. Most of them would give all the money they have to get your health and strength, your good teeth and nice hair. You have no idea how tired they are at times, but because they do not complain you think everything is all right. Well, try to make life easy for them so far as you can, and when it is your turn to suffer you will feel happier for having helped when you could.

Good manners are also important when you are with your own friends. When you speak to anyone, speak clearly and distinctly and sufficiently loudly for the person to hear. It is an insult to a person to ask his attention and then speak so that he does not understand you. And remember it is your responsibility to make yourself understood.

An American writer called Thoreau said, 'It takes two to speak the truth—one to speak, and another to hear.' This is a very important saying, and it would save a great deal of argument and annoyance in life if people would pay attention to it. 'It takes two to speak the truth.' You cannot speak the truth by saying what you think is the truth. You have to express it differently for different people.

It is only stupid people who take remarks too literally, as we say—that is, who do not look for the real meaning in the statements people make. Thus, when a friend says, 'You will not be going past the post office, will you?' he may mean, 'I should be grateful if you would post a

letter for me if it is not too much trouble.' If you say 'No' to the question because you are not going past the post office, it means to your friend that you are not willing to go out of your way even a little to oblige him.

It is not always easy in company to speak frankly, and if you don't want to be considered a bad mannered person, you have to watch constantly for signs. It is not easy, for example, to listen for long to any one person. Try in company to take only a fair share of the conversation. If there are two of you, take half of it. When you have said a little, keep quiet, and give your friend a chance to say something. If he does not talk, he probably does not want you to talk, either. Many a young man or woman talks away, thinking the company is delighted to hear him or her, and every one is really exhausted and angry.

Don't think you can say unpleasant things about someone behind his back and not be found out. It is surprising how the remarks usually find their way to the person with your name attached, so to speak. Whatever you say, always assume that the person may overhear, and modify your remarks accordingly. All experienced people act in this way.

Whenever you are arguing with someone about a point, remember that there is quite a good chance that you are wrong, whoever you are and however confident you feel about it.

Good manners come from having sympathy with others and from understanding our own limitations. 'The Truth' is too big for any one of us to understand. 'The Truth' as we see it is only our truth and part of the real Truth. We

made the first flight across the Atlantic, or the eruption, or same year an aeroplane flew from Er enemies or on the The age of air travel had arrived.

What were the difficulties which that the advance of had to overcome in making successful at. We will them was to decide what general system ought to astro. Naturally the first idea was to use wings as birds do, the some men actually provided themselves with wings fastened to their arms, but they failed. It is an interesting fact that when men try to do the same things as nature does, they usually have to do them in a different way. Carriages, trains and motor-cars use wheels instead of legs; aeroplanes have fixed wings, unlike those of birds; boats are moved by oars or by the wind, and ships by paddle-wheels or screws, though not one of these methods is used by any fish. In general, too, the wheel, a necessary part of most machines, never appears in nature. Thus the decision to use a fixed wing was one that had to be made before any aeroplane could fly satisfactorily.

Some of the early machines had a lot of wings of various sizes and in different positions. The number was soon reduced to a maximum of three, one above the other. The machine with three wings (it looks like one with three pairs of wings, for a wing stretches right across the machine from side to side) was known as a triplane; it disappeared from the sky long ago. The biplane, with two wings, lasted longer and could be seen fairly frequently up to the war of 1939, though it is now becoming a rarity. The monoplane is now the commonest type of aircraft. It has the advantage that it presents less resistance to the air than other types, and can therefore fly faster with the same power.

—G. C. Thornley

'Mr.

MY FINANCIAL CAREER

man is dollars. I go into a bank I get nervous. The clerks make me nervous; the little windows at the counters make me nervous; the sight of the money makes me nervous; everything makes me nervous. A

The moment I go through the door of a bank and attempt to do business there, I become an irresponsible fool. I knew this before I went in, but my salary had been raised to fifty dollars a month and I felt that the bank was the only place for it.

So I walked in with dragging feet and looked shyly round at the clerks. I had an idea that a person about to open an account was obliged to consult the manager.

I went up to a counter marked 'Accountant'. The Accountant was a tall, cool fellow. The very sight of him made me nervous. My voice was deep and hollow.

'Can I see the manager?' I said, and added solemnly, 'alone.' I don't know why I said 'alone.'

'Certainly,' said the accountant, and fetched him.

The manager was a grave, calm man. I held my fifty-six dollars clutched in a screwed-up ball in my pocket.

'Are you the manager?' I said. God knows I didn't doubt it.

'Yes,' he said.

'Can I see you,' I asked, 'alone?' I didn't want to say 'alone' again, but without it the thing seemed obvious.

should always realize that we are humble, unimportant little people on this earth and try to help the world as much as we can in our short time here. 'I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.'

—J. C. Hill

OUR HERITAGE—I

AT all times the work of the Indian craftsman, however primitive and simple his tools, has been admired for its delicacy and skill, and the technical achievement of ancient India was far from negligible. Her spinners and weavers could produce semi-transparent silks and muslins of extreme thinness, which are clearly depicted in sculpture (pl. XXVb), and which were much in demand in the Roman Empire. Unlike ancient Greece and medieval China, India developed no true ceramic art; indeed from the aesthetic point of view no pottery of historical times is as good as the simply patterned but well designed wares of the prehistoric North-West (fig. iv); but the bright hard polish of the type of pottery usually called "northern black polished ware" is a very creditable technical achievement. In the working of stone on a large scale India's skill is attested by the enormous monolithic columns of the Mauryan period. Many of these bear Asoka's inscriptions, but it is not certain that they were made and erected by him; some may have existed before his time. All are made of sandstone from the same quarry at Chunar, about twenty-five miles

south-west of Varanasi. Some thirty columns have been found in many parts of Northern India, from Sanchi in the south to the Nepalese Tarai in the north. Their sculptured capitals are great as works of art, but as evidence of Indian technological achievement the columns are even more significant. Weighing as much as fifty tons and measuring some forty feet, they were carved from single blocks of stone, given a polish of wonderful hardness and lustre, and often transported many hundreds of miles to their present positions. The process of their manufacture, polishing and transport has not yet been fully explained, and the secret was apparently lost soon after the Mauryan period, when the school of craftsmen who worked the Chunar sandstone vanished. Though many fine examples of later stone carving have come down to us, some much more impressive artistically than the Mauryan columns, it is doubtful whether India ever again showed such complete mastery of the handling of enormous pieces of stone.

The Iron Pillar of Mehrauli, near Delhi, is even more remarkable, though of little artistic value and less immediately impressive than the Mauryan columns. It is a memorial to king called Chandra, who was probably Chandra Gupta (c. 376—415), and it now stands not far from the famous Qutb Minar, one of the greatest monuments of Muslim India, though it was originally erected on a hill near Ambala. It is over twenty-three feet high, and consists of a single piece of iron, of a size and weight which could not have been produced by the best European iron-founders until about one hundred years ago. As with the Mauryan columns we have no clear evidence of how it was made, but it must have demanded immense care and labour, and great technical proficiency in preparing and

heating the metal. The metallurgical skill of ancient India is further attested by the fact that this pillar, though it has weathered the torrential rains of over 1,500 monsoons, shows no sign of rusting. This is not due to the fact that the Indians had discovered some form of stainless steel alloy, for the column is of iron almost chemically pure. Several suggestions have been put forward to account for the remarkable durability of the Iron Pillar, but no wholly satisfactory explanation has been given. The theory, confidently proposed in a Scientific Journal,²⁷ that the dry atmosphere of Delhi is a sufficient cause is quite inadequate, for Delhi is very humid during the rainy season, when ordinary iron quickly rusts. Since the process of oxidization demands a catalyst, it may be the great purity of the metal which has preserved the Iron Pillar so long, as another memorial to India's technical skill.

An Extract from "THE WONDER THAT WAS INDIA"

—A. L. Basham

OUR HERITAGE—II

"If I were asked", Pandit Nehru has said, "what is the greatest treasure which India possesses and what is her finest heritage, I would answer unhesitatingly that it is the Sanskrit language and literature and all that it contains."

This is indeed true. Because, if we think of the wonderful thoughts which our ancestors put down in the early books, at a time when the people of Europe were in their infancy, we can be justly proud of our heritage.

What is this heritage?

It is in the lovely lyric poetry of the Vedas. It is in the wise sayings of the Upanishads. It is in the grand sweep of the epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata. It is in the portrayal of emotion and mood and character in the classical drama of Kalidasa, Bana, Harsha and Sudraka. All these taught our ancestors how to live.

The early poems in the Rig Veda are rather simple. It seems that the tribes who sang them came face to face with the dread powers of nature, storms, high mountains, fire, and dense jungles full of trees. They thought that each of these things had a spirit behind it. So they imagined all kinds of Gods, like Rudra, the god of storm, Indra, the god of rain, Agni, the god of fire, Surya the sun-god. And they involved all the gods to help them to grow good harvests, and they offered prayers and sacrifices to the spirits. Later, in the Rig Veda, and in the Sama, Yajur and Atharva Vedas, they began to ask more profound questions. Life was becoming complex and many difficulties arose. So they tried to solve these difficulties by making guesses and thinking, solving what is called the riddle of existence. You might remember that the 'Hymn of Creation' goes very far in probing the mystery of life in this Universe.

In the Upanishads, we find that the tribes have settled down in villages and arranged their relations with each other. So they seek to sort out their relations with the gods. And, after much discussion the idea of a single supreme God emerges. He is the God of all the other gods. And the world is explained in this way. There was once One Supreme God, Brahman. In him arose the desire to create many things. So the whole Universe,

and the human beings in it, came to be. And as, though his desire to be Many, all the different things in the world came to be, so there is a desire in all beings and things to become One with the Supreme God.

This simple yet subtle idea has dominated the minds of Hindus for nearly two thousand years. Of course, the theory has been changed in many ways. But it is in almost all Sanskrit writings.

As the priests had made Sanskrit more and more difficult, the ordinary people talked in dialects called Prakrits. Gautama and Mahavira spoke to the people, in the Prakrit languages which they could understand. And thus the people's languages grew. Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, and the other languages which we speak and write today, were formed in this way.

But, of course, Sanskrit was the language in which many books about gods and men were written. These have come down to us. And we find there is no part of man's life which was not discussed in the great literature of our country. And some of the writing is the loveliest in the world, equal to all the beautiful literature written in the other world languages.

—*Mulk Raj Anand*

READING DETECTIVE STORIES IN BED

READING detective stories in bed. I find this delightful at home, and even more delightful when I am away from home, a lost man. The fuss of the day is done with; you are snugly installed in bed, in a little lighted place of your own; and now to make the mind as cosy as the body. But

why detective stories ? Why not some good literature ? Because, with a few happy exceptions—and there are far too few of them—good literature, which challenges and excites the mind, will not do. In my view, it should be read away from the bedroom. But why not some dull, solemn stuff, portentous memories, faded works of travel, soporifics bound in calf ? Here I can speak only for myself. But if my bed book is too dull then I begin to think of my own work and then sleep is banished for hours. No, the detective story is the thing, and its own peculiar virtues have not been sufficiently appreciated. The worst attempt I ever heard the *Brains Trust* make was at a question concerning the popularity of detective stories. The wise men waffled on about violence and crime, missing the point by miles. (But then a man who enjoyed his detective stories at night would not bother being on the *Brains Trust*.) We enthusiasts are not fascinated by violence or the crime element in these narratives. Often, like myself, we deplore the blood-and-bones atmosphere and wish the detective novelists were not so conventional about offering us murder all the time. (A superb detective story could be written—and I have half a mind to write it—about people who were not involved in any form of crime. About disappearance or a double life, for example.) Please remember that most serious fiction now has ceased to appeal to our taste for narrative. The novelist may be a social critic, a philosopher, a poet, or a madman, but he is no longer primarily a story-teller. And there are times when we do not want anybody's social criticism or deep psychological insight or prose-poetry or vision of the world; we want a narrative, an artfully contrived tale. But not any kind of tale, no fragrant romances and the like. What we want—or at least what I want, late at night; you can please yourself—

is a tale that is in its own way a fine picture of life but yet has an entertaining puzzle element in it. And this is what the detective story offers. It is of course highly conventional and stylized—think of all those final meetings in the library, or those little dinners in Soho paid for out of a Scotland Yard salary—but its limitations are part of its charm. It opposes to the vast mournful muddle of the real world its own tidy problem and neat solution. As thoughtful citizens we are hemmed in now by gigantic problems that appear as insoluble as they are menacing, so how pleasant it is to take an hour or two off to consider the only problem of the body that locked itself in its study and then used the telephone. (*We know now that Sir Rufus must have died not later than ten o'clock, and yet we know too that he apparently telephoned to Lady Bridget at ten-fortyfive—eh. Trevors?*) This is easy and sensible compared with the problem of remaining a sane citizen in the middle of the twentieth century. After the newspaper headlines, it is refreshing to enter this well-ordered microcosm, like finding one's way into a garden after wandering for days in a jungle. I like to approach sleep by way of these neat simplifications, most of them as soundly ethical as Socrates himself. It is true that I may burn my bed-light too long, just because I must know how the dead Sir Rufus managed to telephone; yet one problem having been settled for me, I feel I sleep all the sounder for this hour or two's indulgence. And what a delight it is to switch off the day's long chaos, stretch legs that have begun to ache a little, turn on the right side, and then once more find the eccentric private detective moodily playing his violin or tending his orchids, or discover again the grumpy inspector doodling in his office, and know that a still more astonishing puzzle is on its way to him and to me !

—J. B. Priestley

FORGETTING

A LIST of articles lost by railway travellers and now on sale at a great London station has been published, and many people who read it have been astonished at the absent-mindedness of their fellows. If statistical records were available on the subject, however, I doubt whether it would be found that absent-mindedness is common. It is the efficiency rather than the inefficiency of human memory that compels my wonder. Modern man remembers even telephone numbers. He remembers the addresses of his friends. He remembers the dates of good vintages. He remembers appointments for lunch and dinner. His memory is crowded with the names of actors and actresses and cricketers and footballers amid murderers. He can tell you what the weather was like in a long-past August, and the name of the provincial hotel at which he had a vile meal during the summer. In his ordinary life, again, he remembers almost everything that he is expected to remember. How many men in all London forget a single item of their clothing when dressing in the morning ? Not one in a hundred. Perhaps not one in ten thousand. How many of them forget to shut the front door when leaving the house ? Scarcely more. And so it goes on through the day, almost everybody remembering to do the right thing at the right moment till it is time to go to bed, and then the ordinary man seldom forgets to turn off the lights before going upstairs.

There are, it must be admitted, some matters in regard to which the memory works with less than its usual perfection. It is only a very methodical man, I imagine, who can always remember to take the medicine his doctor has prescribed for him. This is the more surprising because

medicine should be one of the easiest things to remember. As a rule, it is supposed to be taken before, during, or after meals, and the meal itself should be a reminder of it. The fact remains, however, that few but the moral giants remember to take their medicine regularly. Certain psychologists tell us that we forget things because we wish to forget them, and it may be that it is because of their antipathy to pills and potions that many people fail to remember them at the appointed hours. This does not explain, however, how it is that a life-long devotee of medicines like myself is as forgetful of them as those who take them most unwillingly. The very prospect of a new and widely advertized cure-all delights me. Yet, even if I have the stuff in my pockets, I forget about it as soon as the hour approaches at which I ought to swallow it. Chemists make their fortunes out of the medicines people forget to take.

The commonest form of forgetfulness, I suppose, occurs in the matter of posting letters. So common it is that I am always reluctant to trust a departing visitor to post an important letter. So little do I rely on his memory that I put him on his oath before handing the letter to him. As for myself, any one who asks me to post a letter is a poor judge of character. Even if I carry the letter in my hand I am always past the first pillar-box before I remember that I ought to have posted it. Weary of holding it in my hand, I then put it for safety into one of my pockets and forget all about it. After that, it has an unadventurous life till a long chain of circumstances leads to a number of embarrassing questions being asked, and I am compelled to produce the evidence of my guilt from my pocket. This, it might be thought, must be due to a lack of interest in other people's letters; but that cannot be the explanation,

for I forget to post some even of the few letters that I myself remember to write.

As for leaving articles in trains and in taxis, I am no great delinquent in such matters. I can remember almost anything except books and walking-sticks, and I can often remember even books. Walking-sticks I find it quite impossible to keep. I have an old-fashioned taste for them, and I buy them frequently, but no sooner do I pay a visit to a friend's house or go a journey in a train, than another stick is on its way into the world of the lost. I dare not carry an umbrella for fear of losing it. To go through life without ever having lost an umbrella—has even the grimdest-jawed umbrella-carrier ever achieved this?

Few of us, however, have lost much property on our travels through forgetfulness. The ordinary man arrives at his destination with all his bags and trunks safe. The list of articles lost in trains during the year suggests that it is the young rather than the adult who forget things, and that sportsmen have worse memories than their ordinary serious-minded fellows. A considerable number of footballs and cricket-bats, for instance, were forgotten. This is easy to understand, for boys, returning from the games, have their imaginations still filled with the vision of the playing-field, and their heads are among the stars—or their hearts in their boots—as they recall their exploits or their errors. They are abstracted from the world outside them. Memories prevent them from remembering to do such small prosaic things as take the ball or the bat with them when they leave the train. For the rest of the day, they are citizens of dreamland. The same may be said, no doubt, of anglers who forget their fishing-rods. Anglers are generally said—I do not know with what justification—to be the

most imaginative of men, and the man who is inventing magnificent lies on the journey home after a day's fishing is bound to be a little absent-minded in his behaviour. The fishing-rod of reality is forgotten by him as he day-dreams over the feats of the fishing-rod of Utopia. His loss of memory is really a tribute to the intensity of his enjoyment in thinking about his day's sport. He may forget his fishing-rod, as the poet may forget to post a letter, because his mind is filled with matter more glorious. Absent-mindedness of this kind seems to me all but a virtue. The absent-minded man is often a man who is making the best of life and therefore has no time to remember the mediocre. Who would have trusted Socrates or Coleridge to post a letter ? They had souls above such things.

The question whether the possession of a good memory is altogether desirable has often been discussed, and men with fallible memories have sometimes tried to make out a case for their superiority. A man, they say, who is a perfect remembering machine is seldom a man of the first intelligence, and they quote various cases of children or men who had marvellous memories and who yet had no intellect to speak of. I imagine, however, that on the whole the great writers and the great composers of music have been men with exceptional powers of memory. The poets I have known have had better memories than the stock-brokers I have known. Memory, indeed, is half the substance of their art. On the other hand, statesmen seem to have extraordinarily bad memories. Let two statesmen attempt to recall the same event—what happened, for example, at some Cabinet meeting—and each of them will tell you that the other's story is so inaccurate that either he has a memory like a sieve or is an audacious perverter of

the truth. The frequency with which the facts in the auto-biographies and speeches of statesmen are challenged suggests that the world has not yet begun to produce ideal statesmen—men who, like great poets, have the genius of memory and of intellect combined.

At the same time, ordinarily good memory is so common that we regard a man who does not possess it as eccentric. I have heard of a father who, having offered to take the baby out in a perambulator, was tempted by the sunny morning to pause on his journey and slip into a public-house for a glass of beer. Leaving the perambulator outside, he disappeared through the door of the saloon bar. A little later, his wife had to do some shopping which took her past the public-house, where to her horror she discovered her sleeping baby. Indignant at her husband's behaviour, she decided to teach him a lesson. She wheeled away the perambulator, picturing to herself his terror when he would come out and find the baby gone. She arrived home, anticipating with angry relish the white face and quivering lips that would soon appear with the news that the baby had been stolen. What was her vexation, however, when just before lunch her husband came in smiling cheerfully and asking : 'Well, my dear, what's for lunch today ?' having forgotten all about the baby and the fact that he had taken it out with him. How many men below the rank of philosopher would be capable of such absent-mindedness as this ? Most of us, I fear, are born with prosaically efficient memories. If it were not so, the institution of the family could not survive in any great modern city.

INFLUENCE OF SCIENCE ; SCIENCE AND POPULAR MISCONCEPTION

ONE of the main reasons why wrong ideas and useless practices can grow up is ignorance. Among primitive tribes today, as was the case too in prehistoric times, there is hardly any scientific knowledge, everything is mysterious. The sun rises and sets and the moon changes; but people have no idea why, or what are the relations of the heavenly bodies to the earth. No one knows anything about the natural causes of rain or drought, storms or earthquakes, famine or disease. Thus everything is put down to mysterious influences by magic or by good and bad spirits. Such ideas cannot very well be called superstitious so long as no better explanation is available. But reason may show that they are false; and finally, when scientific knowledge demonstrates the way things really work, the ideas of magic or spirit-influence can be seen to be mere superstitions.

So, as science progresses, superstition ought to grow less. On the whole, that is true. But it is surprising how superstitions linger on. If we are tempted to look down on savage tribes and other nations, for holding such ideas, we should remember that even today, among the most civilized nations, a great many equally stupid superstitions exist and are believed in by a great many people. It is worth making a list of the superstitions which you know about. Some people will not sit down thirteen at table; others will not light three cigarettes from one match or do not like to start anything important on a Friday, or refuse to walk under a ladder; many people buy charms and talismans because they think they will bring them luck. Perhaps you yourself are inclined to believe in some of these ideas ! Try to find out if there is really anything in any of

them, and what reasons there may be for people believing in them.

Probably the most terrible example of superstition is the belief in witchcraft. In Western Europe, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, over three-quarters of a million people were killed, mostly after being tortured, because they were found guilty of witchcraft—something for which today we can find no scientific evidence. When people give reasons for persecuting others, we ought to be very sure that their reasons are not merely superstitions, or based on false principles.

In addition, even in civilized nations today, many actions take place and laws are made on the basis of principles which are just as much unproved assumptions as were many of those of the philosophies of the Middle Ages. For instance, it is often held as a principle that white people are by nature superior to people of other colours. In the same sort of way the ancient Greeks believed themselves by nature superior to the barbarians of Northern and Western Europe. The only way to see if there is anything in such a principle is to make scientific studies of numbers of white and black and brown people under different conditions of life and education and find out just what they can and cannot achieve.

It is, however, true that the increase of scientific knowledge does reduce superstition and also baseless guessing and useless argument and practices. Civilized people do not argue and get angry about what water is composed of: the composition of water is known, and there is no argument about it. They may be frightened at a volcanic eruption or an outbreak of plague; but they do not try to calm

The manager looked at me in some alarm. 'I had a terrible secret to reveal.'

'Come in here,' he said, and led the way to room. 'He turned the key in the lock.'

'We are safe from interruption here,' he said: 'sit down.'

We both sat down and looked at each other. 'I forgot no voice to speak.'

'You are one of Pinkerton's men, I suppose,' he said.

He had gathered from my mysterious manner that I was a detective. I knew what he was thinking, and it made me worse.

'No, not from Pinkerton's,' I said, seeming to suggest that I came from a rival agency.

'To tell the truth,' I went on, as if I had been tempted to lie about it, 'I am not a detective at all. I have come to open an account. I intend to keep all my money in this bank.'

The manager looked relieved but still serious; he concluded now that I was a son of Baron Rothschild or a young Gould.

'A large account, I suppose,' he said.

'Fairly large,' I whispered. 'I propose to deposit fifty-six dollars now and fifty dollars a month regularly.'

The manager got up and opened the door. 'He called to the accountant.'

'Mr. Montgomery,' he said unkindly loud, 'this gentleman is opening an account. He will deposit fifty-six dollars. Good morning.'

I rose.

A big iron door stood open at the side of the room.

'Good morning,' I said, and stepped into the safe.

'Come out,' said the manager coldly, and showed me the other way.

I went up to the accountant's counter and pushed the ball of money at him with a sudden, quick movement as if I were doing a conjuring trick.

My face was pale as death.

'Here,' I said, 'deposit it.' The tone of the words seemed to mean, 'Let us do this painful thing while we are in the mood for it.'

He took the money and gave it to another clerk.

He made me write the sum on a piece of paper and sign my name in a book. I no longer knew what I was doing. The bank was going round and round before my eyes.

'Is it deposited?' I asked in a hollow, vibrating voice.

'It is,' said the accountant.

'Then I want to draw a cheque.'

My idea was to draw out six dollars of it for present use. Someone gave me a cheque-book through a little window and someone else began telling me how to write it out.

The people in the bank had the impression that I was a millionaire who had something wrong with him. I wrote something on the cheque and thrust it in at the clerk. He looked at it.

'What ! are you drawing it all out again ?' he asked in surprise. Then I realized that I had written fifty-six instead of six. I was too far gone to reason now. I had a feeling that it was impossible to explain the thing. All the clerks had stopped writing to look at me.

Reckless with misery, I made up my mind.

'Yes, the whole thnig.'

'You withdraw your money from the bank ?'

'Every cent of it.'

'Are you not going to deposit any more ?' said the clerk, astonished.

'Never.'

A foolish hope struck me that they might think something had insulted me while I was writing the cheque and that I had changed my mind. I made a wretched attempt to look like a man with a fearfully quick temper.

The clerk prepared to pay the money.

'How will you have it ?' he said.

'What ?'

'How will you have it ?'

'Oh'—I caught his meaning and answered without even trying to think—"in fifties."

He gave me a fifty-dollar bill.

'And the six?' he asked dryly.

'In sixes,' I said.

He gave it to me and I rushed out.

As the big door swung behind me I caught the echo of a roar of laughter that went up to the ceiling of the bank. Since then I bank no more. I keep my money in cash in my trouser's pocket and my savings in silver dollars in a sock.

—Stephen Leacock

THE BISHOP'S CANDLESTICKS

CHARACTERS

The Bishop

The Convict

Marie

Persomé,

Sergeant

the Bishop's sister,

of

a widow.

Gendarmes

Time : *The beginning of last century.*

Place : *France, about thirty miles from Paris.*

Scene : *The kitchen of the Bishop's cottage. It is plainly but substantially furnished. Doors R. and L. and L. C. Window R. C. Fireplace with heavy mantelpiece down R. Oak settle with cushions behind door L. C. Table in window R. C. with writing materials and crucifix (wood). Eight-day clock R. of window. Kitchen dresser with cupboard to lock down L. Oak dining table*

R. C. Chairs, books, etc. Winter wood scene without. On the mantelpiece are two very handsome candlesticks which look strangely out of place with their surroundings.

Marie and Persomé discovered. *Marie stirring some soup on the fire. Persomé laying the cloth, etc.*

Persomé : Marie, isn't the soup boiling yet ?

Marie : Not yet, madam.

Persomé : Well it ought to be. You haven't tended the fire properly, child.

Marie : But, madam, you yourself made the fire up.

Persomé : Don't answer me back like that. It is rude.

Marie : Yes, madam.

Persomé : Then don't let me have to rebuke you again.

Marie : No, madam.

Persomé : I wonder where my brother can be. It is after eleven o'clock [*looking at the clock*] and no sign of him. Marie !

Marie : Yes, madam.

Persomé : Did Monseigneur the Bishop leave any message for me ?

Marie : No, madam.

Persomé : Did he tell you where he was going ?

Marie : Yes, madam.

Persomé : 'Yes, madam' [*imitating*]. Then why haven't you told me, stupid !

Marie : Madam didn't ask me.

Persomé : But that is no reason for your not telling me is it ?

Marie : Madam said only this morning I was not to chatter, so I thought—

Persomé : Ah, mon Dieu, you thought ! Ah ! It is hopeless.

Marie : Yes, madam.

Persomé : Don't keep saying 'Yes, madam', like a parrot, nincompoop.

Marie : No, madam.

Persomé : Well. Where did monseigneur say he was going ?

Marie : To my mother's, madam.

Persomé : To your mother's indeed ! And why, pray ?

Marie : Monseigneur asked me how she was, and I told him she was feeling poorly.

Persomé : You told him she was feeling poorly, did you ? And so my brother is to be kept out of his bed, and go without his supper because you told him she was feeling poorly. There's gratitude for you !

Marie : Madam, the soup is boiling !

Persomé : Then pour it out, fool, and don't chatter. [Marie about to do so] No, no. Not like that, here let me do it, and do you put the salt-cellars on the table—the silver ones.

Marie : The silver ones, madam ?

Persomé : Yes, the silver ones. Are you deaf as well as stupid ?

Marie : They are sold, madam.

Persomé : Sold ! [*With horror*] Sold ! Are you mad ? Who sold them ? Why were they sold ?

Marie : Monseigneur the Bishop told me this afternoon while you were out to take them to Monsieur Gervais who has often admire them, and sell them for as much as I could.

Persomé : But you had no right to do so without asking me.

Marie : But, madam, Monseigneur the Bishop told me [*with awe*].

Persomé : Monseigneur the Bishop is a—ahem ! But, but what can he have wanted with the money ?

Marie : Pardon, madam, but I think it was for Mere Gringoire.

Persomé : Mere Gringoire indeed ! Mere Gringoire ! What the old witch who lives at the top of the hill, and who says she is bedridden because she is too lazy to do any work ? And what did Mere Gringoire want with the money, pray ?

Marie : Madam, it was for the rent. The bailiff would not wait any longer and threatened to turn her out to-day if it were not paid, so she sent little Jean to monseigneur to ask for help and—

Persomé : Oh, mon Dieu ! It is hopeless, hopeless. We shall have nothing left. His estate is sold, his savings have gone. His furniture, everything. Were it not for my little dot we should starve, and now my beautiful—beautiful [*sob*] salt-cellars. Ah, it is too much, too much. [*She breaks down crying.*]

Marie : Madam, I am sorry, if I had known—

Persomé : Sorry, and why, pray ? If Monseigneur the Bishop chooses to sell his salt-cellars he may do so, I suppose. Go and wash your hands, they are disgracefully dirty.

Marie : Yes, madam [*going towards R.*].

[Enter the Bishop, C.]

Bishop : Ah, how nice and warm it is in here ! It is worth going out in the cold for the sake of the comfort of coming in. [*Persomé has hastened to help him off with his coat, etc. Marie has dropped a deep curtsey.*]

Thank you, dear [*looking at her*]. Why, what is the matter ? You have been crying. Has Marie been troublesome, eh ? [*Shaking his finger at her*] Ah !

Persomé : No, it wasn't Marie—but, but—

Bishop : Well, well, you shall tell me presently. Marie, my child, run home now, your mother is better, I have prayed with her, and the doctor has been. Run home ! [*Marie putting on cloak and going.*] And, Marie, let yourself in quietly in case your mother is asleep.

Marie : Oh, thanks, thanks, monseigneur.

[*She goes to door C., as it opens the snow drives in.*]

Bishop : Here, Marie, take my comforter, it will keep you warm. It is very cold to-night.

Marie : Oh, no, monseigneur [*shamefacedly*] !

Persomé : What nonsense, brother, she is young, she won't hurt.

Bishop : Ah, Persomé, you have not been out, you don't know how cold it has become. Here, Marie, let me put it on for you. [*Does so.*] There ! Run along, little one.

[*Exit Marie, C.*]

Persomé : Brother, I have no patience with you. There, sit down and take your soup, it has been waiting ever so long. And if it is spoilt it serves you right.

Bishop : It smells delicious.

Persomé : I'm sure Marie's mother is not so ill that you need have stayed out on such a night as this. I believe those people pretend to be ill just to have the Bishop call on them. They have no thought of the Bishop !

Bishop : It is kind of them to want to see me.

Persomé : Well for my part I believe that charity begins at home.

Bishop : And so you make me this delicious soup. You are very good to me, sister.

Persomé : Good to you, yes ! I should think so. I should like to know where you would be without

me to look after you. The dupe of every idle scamp or lying old woman in the perish.

Bishop : If people lie to me they are poorer, not I.

Persomé : But it is ridiculous, you will soon have nothing left. You give away everything, everything !!!

Bishop : My dear, there is so much suffering in the world, and I can do so little [*sighs*], so very little.

Persomé : Suffering, yes, but you never think of suffering you cause to those who love you best, the suffering you cause to me.

Bishop [*rising*] : You, sister dear ? Have I hurt you ? Ah, I remember you had been crying. Was it my fault ? I didn't mean to hurt you. I am sorry.

Persomé : Sorry. Yes. Sorry won't mend it. Humph ! Oh, do go on eating your soup before it gets cold.

Bishop : Very well, dear. [*Sits.*] But tell me—

Persomé : You are like a child, I can't trust you out of my sight. No sooner is my back turned than you get that little minx Marie to sell the silver salt-cellars.

Bishop : Ah, yes, the salt-cellars. It is a pity. You, you were proud of them ?

Persomé : Proud of them, why they have been in our family for years.

Bishop : Yes, it is a pity, they were beautiful, but still, dear, one can eat salt out of china just as well.

Persomé : Yes, or meat off the floor, I suppose. Oh, it's coming to that. And as for that old wretch Mere

Gringoire, I wonder she had the audacity to send here again. The last time I saw her I gave her such a talking to that it ought to have had some effect.

Bishop : Yes ! I offered to take her in here for a day or two, but she seemed to think it might distress you.

Persomé : Distress me !!!

Bishop : And the bailiff, who is a very just man, would not wait longer for the rent, so—so—you see I *had* to pay it.

Persomé : *You had* to pay it. [Gesture of comic despair.]

Bishop : Yes, and you see I had no money so I had to dispose of the salt-cellars. It was fortunate I had them, wasn't it ? [Smiling] But I'm sorry I have grieved you.

Persomé : Oh, go on ! go on ! you are incorrigible. You'll sell your candle sticks next.

Bishop [with real concern] : No, no, sister, not my candle sticks.

Persomé : Oh ! Why not ? They would pay somebody's rent, I suppose.

Bishop : Ah, you are good, sister, to think of that but, but I don't want to sell them. You see, dear, my mother gave them to me on—on her deathbed just after you were born, and—and she asked me to keep them in remembrance of her, so I would like to keep them, but perhaps it is a sin to set such store by them ?

Persomé : Brother, brother, you will break my heart [with tears in her voice]. There ! don't say anything more.

Kiss me and give me your blessing. I'm going to bed.
 [They kiss.]

[Bishop making sign of the Cross and murmuring blessing.]

[Persomé locks cupboard door and turns to go.]

Persomé : Don't sit up too long and tire your eyes.

Bishop : No, dear ! Good night ! [Persomé exits R.]

Bishop [comes to table and opens a book, then looks up at the candlesticks] : They would pay somebody's rent. It was kind of her to think of that.

[He stirs the fire, trims the lamp, arranges some books and papers, sits down, is restless, shivers slightly, clock outside strikes twelve and he settles to read. Music during this. Enter the Convict stealthily, he has a long knife and seizes the Bishop from behind.]

Convict : If you call out you are a deadman !

Bishop : But, my friend, as you see, I am reading. Why should I call out ? Can I help you in any way ?

Convict [hoarsely] : I want food. I'm starving. I haven't eaten anything for three days. Give me food quickly, quickly, curse you.

Bishop [eagerly] : But certainly, my son, you shall have food. I will ask my sister for the keys of the cupboard.
 [Rising.]

Convict : Sit down !!! [The Bishop sits, smiling.]
 None of that my friend ! I'm too old a bird to be

caught with chaff. You would ask dacity to send the keys, would you ? A likely story ! ve her such rouse the house too. Eh ? Ha ! ha ! Aome effect. truly. Come, where is the food ? I want no-~~re~~ I have a wolf inside me tearing at my entrails, tearing me; quick, tell me where the food is.

Bishop [aside] : I wish Persomé would not lock the cupboard. [Aloud] Come, my friend, you have nothing to fear. My sister and I are alone here.

Convict : How do I know that ?

Bishop : Why I have just told you.

[Convict looks long at the Bishop.]

Convict : Humph ! I'll risk it. [Bishop, going to door R.] But mind ! Play me false and as sure as there are devils in hell I'll drive my knife through your heart. I have nothing to lose.

Bishop : You have your soul to lose, my son, it is of more value than my heart. [At door R. calling.] Persomé !

[The Convict stands behind him with his knife ready.]

Persomé [within] : Yes, brother.

Bishop : Here is a poor traveller who is hungry. If you are not undressed will you come and open the cupboard and I will give him some supper.

Persomé [within] : What, at this time of night ? A pretty business truly. Are we to have no sleep now, but

to be at the beck and call of every ne'er-do-well
who happens to pass ?

Bishop : But, Persomé, the traveller is hungry.

Persomé : Oh, very well, I am coming. [Persomé enters
R. sees the knife in the Convict's hand] [Frightened]
Brother, what is he doing with that knife ?

Bishop : The knife, oh, well, you see, dear, perhaps he may
have thought I—I had sold ours.

[Laughs gently.]

Persomé : Brother, I am frightened. He glares at us like
a wild beast [*aside to him*].

Convict : Hurry, I tell you. Give me food or I'll stick my
knife in you both and help myself.

Bishop : Give me the keys, Persomé, [*she gives them to him*]
and now, dear, you may go to bed.

[Persomé going. *The Convict springs in front of her.*]

Convict : Stop ! Neither of you leave this room till I do.
[She looks at the Bishop.]

Bishop : Persomé, will you favour this gentleman with
your company at supper ? He evidently desires it.

Persomé : Very well, brother.

[She sits down at table staring at the two.]

Bishop : Here is some cold pie and a bottle of wine and
some bread.

Convict : Put them on the table, and stand below it so that
I can see you.

[Bishop does so and opens drawer in table, taking out knife and fork, looking at the knife in Convict's hand.]

Convict : My knife is sharp. [He runs his finger along the edge and looks at them meaningfully.] And as for forks [taking it up] faugh ! steel. [He throws it away.] We don't use forks in prison.

Persomé : Prison ?

Convict [cutting off an enormous slice, which he tears with his fingers like an animal, then starts] : What was that ? [He looks at the door.] Why the devil do you leave the window unshuttered and the door unbarred so that anyone can come in [shutting them] ?

Bishop : That is why they are left open.

Convict : Well, they are shut now !

Bishop [sighs] : For the first time in thirty years.

[Convict eats voraciously and throws a bone on the floor.]

Persomé : Oh, my nice clean floor !

[Bishop picks up the bone and puts it on plate.]

Convict : You're not afraid of thieves ?

Bishop : I am sorry for them.

Convict : Sorry for them. Ha! ha! ha! [Drinks from bottle.] That's a good one. Sorry for them, Ha! ha! ha! [Drinks.] [Suddenly] What the devil are you ?

Bishop : I am a bishop.

Convict : Ha! ha! ha! A bishop. Holy Virgin, a bishop.
Well I'm damned !

Bishop : I hope you may escape that, my son. Persomé, you may leave us, this gentleman will excuse you.

Persomé : Leave you with—

Bishop : Please ! My friend and I can talk more—freely then.

[*By this time, owing to his starving condition, the wine has affected the Convict.*]

Convict : What's that ? Leave us. Yes, yes, leave us. Good night. I want to talk to the Bishop. The Bishop. Ha! ha! [*Laughs as he drinks and coughs.*]

Bishop : Good night, Persomé.

[*He holds the door open and she goes out R. holding in her skirts as she passes the Convict.*]

Convict [*chuckling to himself*] : The Bishop. Ha! ha! Well I'm—[*Suddenly very loudly.*] D'you know what I am ?

Bishop : I think one who has suffered much.

Convict : Suffered [*puzzled*], suffered ? My God, yes. [*Drinks*] But that's a long time ago. Ha ! ha ! That was when I was a man, now I'm not a man ; now I'm a number : number 15729, and I've lived in hell for ten years.

Bishop : Tell me about it—about hell.

Convict : Why ? [*Suspiciously*] Do you want to tell the police—to set them on my track ?

Bishop : No ! I will not tell the police.

Convict [*looks at him earnestly*] : I believe you [*scratching his head*], but damn me if I know why.

Bishop [*laying his hand on the Convict's arm*] : Tell me about the time—the time before you went to—hell.

Convict : It's so long ago I forgot, but I had a little cottage, there were vines growing on it [*dreamily*], they looked pretty with the evening sun on them and, and—there was a woman—she was [*thinking hard*] —she must have been my wife—yes. [*Suddenly and very rapidly*] Yes, I remember ! she was ill, we had no food, I could get no work, it was a bad year, and my wife, my Jeanette, was ill, dying, [*pause*] so I stole, to buy her food. [*Long pause. The Bishop gently pats his hand.*] They caught me. I pleaded to them, I told them why I stole, but they laughed at me, and I was sentenced to ten years in the prison hulks, [*pause*] ten years in hell. The night I was sentenced the gaoler told me—told me Jeanette was dead. [*Sobs, with fury*] Ah, damn them, damn them. God curse them all.

[*He sinks on the table sobbing.*]

Bishop : Now tell me about the prison-ship, about hell.

Convict : Tell you about it ? Look here, I was a man once. I'm a beast now, and they made me what I am. They chained me up like a wild animal, they lashed me like a hound. I fed on filth, I was covered with vermin, I slept on boards and I complained. Then they lashed me again. For ten years, ten years. Oh God ! They took away my name, they took away

my soul, and they gave me a devil in its place. But one day they were careless, one day they forgot to chain up their wild beast, and he escaped. He was free. That was six weeks ago. I was free, free to starve.

Bishop : To starve ?

Convict : Yes, to starve. They feed you in hell, but when you escape from it you starve. They were hunting me everywhere and I had no passport, no name. So I stole again, I stole these rags, I stole my food daily, I slept in the woods, in barns, anywhere. I dare not ask for work, I dare not go into a town to beg, so I stole, and they have made me what I am, they have made me a thief. God curse them all.

[*Empties the bottle and throws it into the fireplace
R., smashing it.*]

Bishop : My son, you have suffered much, but there is hope for all.

Convict : Hope ! Hope ! Ha ! ha ! ha ! [Laughs wildly.]

Bishop : You have walked far, you are tired. Lie down and sleep on the couch there, and I will get you some coverings.

Convict : And if anyone comes ?

Bishop : No one will come, but if they do, are you not my friend ?

Convict : Your friend [puzzled] ?

Bishop : They will not molest the Bishop's friend.

Convict : The Bishop's friend !

[*Scratching his head, utterly puzzled.*]

Bishop : I will get the coverings.

[*Exit L.*]

Convict [*looks after him, scratches his head*] : The Bishop's friend ! [*He goes to fire to warm himself and notices the candlesticks. He looks round to see if he is alone, and takes them down, weighing them.*] Silver, by God, and heavy. What a prize !

[*He hears the Bishop coming, and in his haste drops one candlestick on the table.*]

[*Enter the Bishop.*]

Bishop [*sees what is going on, but goes to the settle up L. with coverings*] : Ah, you are admiring my candlesticks. I am proud of them. They were a gift from my mother. A little too handsome for this poor cottage perhaps, but all I have to remind me of her. Your bed is ready. Will you lie down now ?

Convict : Yes, yes, I'll lie down now. [*Puzzled*] Look here, why the devil are you—ki—kind to me. [*Suspiciously*] What do you want ? Eh ?

Bishop : I want you to have a good sleep, my friend.

Convict : I believe you want to convert me ; save my soul, don't you call it ? Well it's no good, see ? I don't want any damned religion, and as for the Church, bah ! I hate the Church.

Bishop : That is a pity, my son, as the Church does not hate you.

Convict : You are going to try to convert me. Oh, ha! ha! that's a good idea. Ha! ha! ha! No, no, Monseigneur the Bishop. I don't want any of your Faith, Hope, and Charity, see? So anything you do for me you're doing to the devil, understand [defiantly]?

Bishop : One must do a great deal for the devil, in order to do a little for God.

Convict [angrily] : I don't want any damned religion, I tell you.

Bishop : Won't you lie down now, it is late?

Convict [grumbling] : Well all right, but I won't be preached at, I—I—[On couch] You're sure no one will come?

Bishop : I don't think they will, but if they do—you yourself have locked the door.

Convict : Humph! I wonder if it's safe. [He goes to the door and tries it, then turns and sees the Bishop holding the covering, annoyed.] Here! you go to bed. I'll cover myself. [The Bishop hesitates.] Go on, I tell you.

Bishop : Good night, my son.

[Exit L.]

[Convict waits till he is off, then tries the Bishop's door.]

Convict : No lock of course. Curse it. [Looks round and sees the candlesticks again] Humph! I'll have another look at them. [He takes them up and toys with them.] Worth hundreds I'll warrant. If I had these turned into money they'd start me fair.

Humph ! The old boy's fond of them too, said his mother gave him them. His mother, yes. They didn't think of my mother when they sent me to hell. He was kind to me too—but what's a bishop for except to be kind to you ? Here, cheer up, my hearty, you're getting soft. God ! wouldn't my chain-mates laugh to see 15729 hesitating about collaring the plunder because he felt good ? Good ! Ha ! ha ! Oh my God ! Good ! Ha ! ha ! 15729 getting soft. That's a good one. Ha ! ha ! No, I'll take his candlesticks and go, if I stay here he'll preach at me in the morning and I'll get soft. Damn him and his preaching too. Here goes !

[*He takes the candlesticks, stows them in his coat, and cautiously exits L.C. As he does so the door slams.*]

Persomé [without] : Who's there ? Who's there, I say ? Am I to get no sleep to-night ? Who's there, I say ? [Enter R. Persomé] I'm sure I heard the door shut. [Looking round] No one here ? [Knocks at the Bishop's door L. Sees the candlesticks have gone.] The candlesticks, the candlesticks. They are gone. Brother, brother, come out. Fire, murder, thieves !

[Enter Bishop, L.]

Bishop : What is it, dear, what is it ? What is the matter ?

Persomé : He has gone. The man with the hungry eyes has gone, and he has taken your candlesticks.

Bishop : Not my candlesticks, sister, surely not those. [He looks and sighs.] Ah that is hard, very hard, I,

I—He might have left me those. They were all I had. [Almost breaking down.]

Persomé : Well, but go and inform the police. He can't have gone far. They will soon catch him, and you'll get the candlesticks back again. You don't deserve them, though, leaving them about with a man like that in the house.

Bishop : You are right, Persomé. It was my fault. I led him into temptation.

Persomé : Oh, nonsense ! Led him into temptation indeed ! The man is a thief, a common scoundrelly thief. I knew it the moment I saw him. Go and inform the police or I will.

[Going, but he stops her.]

Bishop : And have him sent back to prison [very softly], sent back to hell ! No, Persomé. It is a just punishment for me; I set too great store by them. It was a sin. My punishment is just, but oh God, it is hard, it is very hard.

[He buries his head in his hands.]

Persomé : No, brother, you are wrong. If you won't tell the police I will. I will not stand by and see you robbed. I know you are my brother and my bishop and the best man in all France, but you are a fool, I tell you, a child, and I will not have your goodness abused. I shall go and inform the police [going].

Bishop : Stop, Persomé. The Candlesticks were mine, they are his now. It is better so. He has more

need of them than I. My mother would have wished it so had she been here.

Persomé : But—

[*Great knocking without.*]

Sergeant [*without*] : Monseigneur, monseigneur, we have something for you, may we enter ?

Bishop : Enter, my son.

[*Enter Sergeant and three Gendarmes with Convict bound. The Sergeant carried the candlesticks.*]

Persomé : Ah so they have caught you, villain, have they ?

Sergeant : Yes, madam, we found this scoundrel slinking along the road, and as he wouldn't give any account of himself we arrested him on suspicion. Holy Virgin, isn't he strong and didn't he struggle? While we were securing him these candlesticks fell out of his pockets. [*Persomé seizes them, goes to table, and brushes them with her apron lovingly.*] I remembered the candlesticks of Monseigneur the Bishop, so we brought him here that you might identify them and then we'll lock him up.

[*The Bishop and the Convict have been looking at each other. The Convict with dogged defiance.*]

Bishop : But, but I don't understand, this gentleman is my very good friend.

Sergeant : Your friend, monseigneur !! Holy Virgin ! Well !!!

Bishop : Yes, my friend, he did me the honour to sup with me to-night and I—I have given him the candlesticks.

Sergeant [*incredulously*] : You gave him, him your candlesticks ? Holy Virgin !

Bishop [*severely*] : Remember, my son, that she is holy.

Sergeant [*saluting*] : Pardon, monseigneur.

Bishop : And now I think you may let your prisoner go.

Sergeant : But he won't show me his papers, he won't tell me who he is.

Bishop : I have told you he is my friend.

Sergeant : Yes, that's all very well, but—

Bishop : He is your Bishop's friend, surely that is enough.

Sergeant : Well, but—

Bishop : Surely ?

[*A pause. The Sergeant and the Bishop look at each other.*]

Sergeant : I—I—Humph ! [*To his men*] Loose the prisoner. [*They do so.*] Right about turn, quick march !

[*Exit Sergeant and Gendarmes. A long pause.*]

Convict [*very slowly, as if in a dream*] : You told them you had given me the candlesticks, given me them. By God !

Persomé [*shaking her fist at him and hugging the candlesticks to her breast*] : Oh, you scoundrel, you pitiful scoundrel, you come here and are fed, and warmed, and—and you thief ; steal from your benefactor. Oh, you blackguard.

Bishop : Persomé, you are overwrought. Go to your room.

Persomé : What, and leave you with him to be cheated again, perhaps murdered. No, I will not.

Bishop [*with slight severity*] : Persomé, leave us, I wish it.
[*She looks hard at him, then turns towards her door.*]

Persomé : Well, if I must go at least I'll take the candlesticks with me.

Bishop [*more severely*] : Persomé, place the candlesticks on that table and leave us.

Persomé [*defiantly*] : I will not !

Bishop [*loudly and with great severity*] : I, your bishop, command it.

[*Persome does so with great reluctance and exits R.*]

Convict [*shamefacedly*] : Monseigneur, I'm glad I didn't get away with them, curse me, I'm. I'm glad.

Bishop : Now won't you sleep here ? See, your bed is ready.

Convict : No ! [*Looking at the candlesticks*] No ! no ! I daren't, I daren't—besides I must go on, I must get to Paris, it is big, and I—I can be lost there, they won't find me there and I must travel at night, do you understand ?

Bishop : I see—you must travel by night.

Convict : I—I didn't believe there was any good in the world—one doesn't when one has been in hell, but somehow I—I—know you're good and, and it's a queer thing to ask but—but could you, would you bless me before I go—I—I think it would help me. I—

[*Hangs his head very shamefacedly.*]

[*Bishop makes sign of the Cross and murmurs blessing.*]

Convict [*tries to speak, but a sob almost chokes him*] :
Good night. [He hurries towards the door.]

Bishop : Stay, my son, you have forgotten your property [*giving him the candlesticks*].

Convict : You mean me—you want me to take them ?

Bishop : Please, they may help you. [*The Convict takes the candlesticks in absolute amazement.*] And, my son, there is a path through the woods at the back of this cottage which leads to Paris, it is a very lonely path, and I have noticed that my good friends the gendarmes do not like lonely paths at night. It is curious.

Convict : Ah, thanks, thanks, monseigneur. I—I [*He sobs.*] Ah ! I'm a fool, a child to cry, but somehow you have made me feel that—that it is just as if something had come into me—as if I were a man again and not a wild beast.

[*The door at back is open, and the Convict is standing in it.*]

Bishop [putting his hands on his shoulder] : Always remember, my son, that this poor body is the Temple of the Living God.

Convict [with great awe] : The Temple of the Living God. I'll remember. [Exit L. C.]

[The Bishop closes the door and goes quietly to the prie-dieu in the window R., he sinks on his knees, and bows his head in prayer.]

SLOW CURTAIN

—Norman McKinnel

THE DISCOVERY

SCENE

On board the SANTA MARIA

TIME

October 11, 1492

CHARACTERS

Christopher Columbus

<i>Pedro Gutierrez</i> :	<i>An Officer</i>
<i>Pepe</i> :	<i>A page-boy</i>
<i>Juan Patiño</i>	
<i>Diego Garcia</i>	
<i>Francisco</i>	<i>Other seamen</i>
<i>Guillermo Ires</i>	

Scene : *The ship is seen from an angle, which brings the poop somewhat to the left, the quarter-deck taking up the greater part of the stage. If it*

is visible, the midmast should bear a crucifix, in passing which everybody mechanically crosses himself. A large lantern, containing a lighted candle, is fixed at the extreme top of the poop. The night is still, and there is little movement in the sails.

Two seamen are visible, both well to the right. Juan is on his knees, adjusting rigging; Diego is helping. The actions of both of them are indeterminate, clearly designed to conceal their real purpose. They speak in loud whispers.

Diego : Within the next half an hour he will go to the poop-head as sure as God's alive. He can't keep away from it. His eyes are glued on the sky as if he expected his precious New World to burst out of it like a thunder-bolt. [He laughs derisively.]

Juan : Poor wretch !

Diego : Now, then, Juan—quaking again !

Juan : That's a lie ! Why should I quake ? What is there to fear ? [After a brief pause.] But I am sorry for him.

Diego : Why waste your pity ? Shall it be one madman, his head stocked with visions, or forty honest seamen pining for their homes ?

Juan : Santísima María, but he's a gracious madman...

Diego [impatiently] : Gracious when all goes to his pleasure, but as irritable as a teething child when crossed !

[*The song of seamen is heard : it is a scarcely distinguishable murmur.*]

Here's a keg o' rum
 To Kingdom Come !
 The Devil laughs,
 But God is dumb !

Juan [sharply] : They ought to stop that. The captain is always furious when he hears it.

Diego : Shan't we even sing to keep up our spirits ? 'Sh !

[*They attend with assumed assiduity to the rigging.*
Pedro Gutierrez comes in; he is somewhat surprised when he sees the others.]

Pedro : Who's that ?

Diego [rising] : Diego Garcia and Juan Patiño, sir.

Pedro [inclined to be communicative] : It's dark. I would welcome the moon.....

Diego : Aye, aye, Don Pedro. Some of us would welcome the coast of Spain still *more*.

Pedro [pumping] : Impatient, Diego ?

Diego [surlily] : There are limits to patience, sir.

Pedro [humouring him] : And you've reached them, eh ?

Diego : We're like bats trying to fly by day. It's time he gave way. Why should one man have the lives of fifty in his hands ?

Pedro [with authority] : I hope we are not entertaining mutinous thoughts, Diego.

Diego : Mutiny is an ugly word, sir.

Pedro : And an uglier deed.

[Juan, finishing his job at the rigging, rises, and with a salute goes off. Columbus comes on. He is a tall, well-built man of forty-six. Hair prematurely white, complexion fair, almost ruddy. A man of quick temper and irritability which he controls only with an effort. His face, in repose, is melancholy. Seeing Don Pedro in conversation with Diego, he looks a trifle suspicious. He turns quickly to Diego.]

Columbus : That candle on the foremast is guttering : see that it is put right.

Diego [sullenly] : Aye, aye, sir. [He goes.]

Columbus [recalling him] : And, Diego !

Diego [coming back] : Yes, sir.

Columbus : This is the quarter-deck.

Diego : Yes, sir.

Columbus : A good sailor knows his place.

Diego [with repressed fury] : Yes, sir.

[Columbus points off; Diego, scarcely concealing a scowl, goes off.]

Columbus [to Pedro] : A surly dog !

Pedro : And a dangerous one. He does more than his share to inspire discontent.

Columbus : I have remarked it.

[Columbus is thoughtful for a moment and remains stationary. Presently he goes on to the poop

and looks out to sea. Pedro follows him. Simultaneously Pepe, the page-boy, emerges from the hatchway, against which he stands, out of sight of the others. When they begin to talk he listens eagerly.]

Columbus : Easterly, ever easterly. God is in the wind, Don Pedro.

Pedro [with a short laugh] : The crew would say that it is the Devil, rather, captain. All day, and every day, the wind blows easterly, blowing them away from their homes and their country, their wives and children, their friends and sweethearts.

Columbus [hastily] : You too, Don Pedro ? Do you, too, doubt ?

Pedro : Have I said so, captain ? Am I not here by your side, prepared ?

Columbus : Forgive me, friend. You are one of the few with faith, and it is not easy to hold fast to faith when nothing seems to warrant faith. Listen to

Seamen [off, singing] :

Here's a keg o' rum
To Kingdom Come !
The Devil laughs,
But God is dumb !

[Columbus and Pedro descend to the quarter-deck.]

Columbus : Madre de Dios—they drink too much.

Pedro : They are simple men and must have their relaxation. [*The next words break from him almost involuntarily.*] We have not all your vision, captain.

Columbus : You are beginning to doubt, Don Pedro. Give me the contents of your mind. I am an impatient man and prone to be unjust; but—[whimsically]—I mean well, Don Pedro. I mean well. Speak without fear.

Pedro [*at first with diffidence, but rapidly gaining confidence*] : Today is the 11th of October—more than two months since we saw the shores of Spain receding. You held a glittering hope of discovery before us, and we had faith. Day followed day, and soon we found ourselves in uncharted seas, but still we had faith... I, at least, had faith. [*With dignity.*] I am a man of some little learning, not easily led to wonder at natural phenomena as the unlettered might be. But I confess that I knew some uneasiness when the needle of the compass, instead of pointing to the constant North, jumped as if the devil had laid hand on it, and pointed to the North-West. I am not a child, nor a simpleton, nor a superstitious seaman; but there is such a thing as being too clever, prying into mysteries which were not meant for our eyes. In all humility, captain, I ask if it is God's will that we should pursue this voyage in the face of every portent of ill-luck ?

Columbus [*impatiently*] : It is my will. Is that not enough ?

Pedro [*bowing his head*] : I am answered.

Columbus [*hastily*] : Forgive me, Don Pedro. A curb for my tongue—oh, a curb for my unbridled tongue, my

worst enemy ! [More quietly.] My will, friend, because God's will. Shall that suffice ?

Pedro [not appeased] : I do not claim your confidence, sir.

Columbus [thundering again] : I claim yours. [The sound of the seamen's song is again heard.] A blight upon their singing ! Bid them stop. [Pedro goes off, with an air of discontent. When he is alone, Columbus looks out at sea. Muttering.] Mystery ? Would God implant the desire to solve mysteries and not provide the solution ? [Suddenly Pepe runs up the steps to the poop. Columbus is startled.] Pañeta ! Who is that ?

Pepe : Me, captain—Pepe !

Columbus [frowning on him] : Have you been there all the time ?

Pepe : Please, sir, I am off duty.

Columbus : Then why aren't you down below ?

Pepe [whimsically, knowing that he is privileged] : I prefer your company to theirs. [He points below.] Am I in the way here, sir ?

Columbus [humouring him] : What a boy ! And what do they say of the preference ?

Pepe : I don't speak to them. I hate them.

Columbus : 'Sh, Pepe ! And get you gone ! [Pepe turns reluctantly.] Quick ! [The boy goes more quickly.] Here ! You heard what Don Pedro said ?

Pepe : Yes, captain. And he is the best.....

Columbus : But even he doubts.....

Pepe : Everybody doubts.....except me.

Columbus [bitterly] : Everybody.....

Pepe [eagerly] : Except me, captain, except me. [He goes to him impetuously.]

Columbus [laying a hand on the boy's head] : You are young enough to have faith. Thank you, boy.

[The seamen's song is heard again.]

Pepe : They are horrible when they drink too much. They say it makes them forget.

Columbus : Poor fellows !

Pepe [approaching nearer] : Captain, be careful. Sometimes they are desperate.

[The song surges up like a growl.]

Columbus : That is ugly. I bade Don Pedro stop them. So you think they might become dangerous ? [Don Pedro returns.] Go, boy. [Pepe moves away, but does not go out.] Well, Don Pedro ? Their singing changes to a roar. The deepening of their discontent is ominous.

[The noise grows louder.]

Pedro : Captain, they ignore my order.

Columbus [furious] : I'll make an example of one of them. [Suddenly] Hallo, there ! What sneaking mischief-maker is that crawling about the deck ? Show yourself ! [Francisco appears from the right.]

Columbus : Ho, Francisco—you, is it ?

Francisco : Yes, sir. And I'm no sneaking mischief-maker.

Columbus : Then why behave as one ? Why are you here ? Did I send for you ? Is discipline obsolete in the Ocean Sea ? Is Jack as good as his master nowadays ?

Francisco [*humbly*] : Your words sting, sir !

Columbus : And are meant to. I am tired of the mumbling and grumbling of the crew. I have been patient too long.

Francisco : I came to warn you, sir. The temper of the crew is dangerous.

Columbus : Danger is the breath of my life. I should doubt I lived if I lived outside danger.

Francisco [*the words springing from him spasmodically*] : Our power of endurance has gone. We refuse to go on. I warn you. I respect your person and do not wish to see violence used ; but it is more than mortal can bear, this endless sailing into unknown seas.

Columbus [*to Pedro*] : Don Pedro, the ship is in your hands. I will talk to our friend as man to man. [Pedro goes on to the poop. Columbus, his voice gentler, almost ingratiating, turns to Francisco, who shifts from foot to foot, nervous by reason of the unaccustomed propinquity.] Francisco, let me plead with you. There are men whom God has chosen for the working of His will. I am such a man. There is no more merit in me than in this ship : we are both instruments of

God. Sometimes He chooses oddly: a stronger than I might have served His purpose better. But since God chose me, who shall withstand me ? The four corners of the earth are to be linked up in the knowledge of their Saviour. I have lifted the veils which obscured the prophecies of Holy Writ, and I have learned that it was ordained that I, chosen among all men, should discover that great world beyond the ocean which I know exists as surely as I know that Heaven exists.

Francisco : Must simple men suffer because of your knowledge ?

Columbus [quickly] : Simple men shall do their duty.

Francisco : There are limits to duty. Men will give up many things for duty and for gain, but you ask too much. Country, family, friends, perhaps even life itself—all these things you ask us to give up for your glory. We are not chosen of God to open up new ways : we are simple, humble men, sick for our homes and hungry for our wives.

Columbus : My Heaven, Francisco, you try me....

Francisco [gaining courage] : Not more than you try us, sir. I come to you as a friend, sir. The men are at the end of their patience and spoiling for a fight. The stoutest rope breaks at last. [The song swells up again. Spoken words mingle with the song, and the voice of Guillermo Ires is heard above the rest.] Did you hear that, sir ?

Columbus : I heard the snarling of angry beasts.

Francisco : You heard the just complaints of angry men, sir. [Again Guillermo's voice pierces the din. Columbus stands rigid, endeavouring to catch the words.] Did you hear that, sir ?

Pepe [who has been unobserved] : They shan't ! They shan't !

Columbus : Boy, come here. What were the words ?

Pepe [almost weeping] : He said : "The Santa Maria will be the lighter for his carcass."

Columbus [bitterly] : He said that, did he ? [He blinks—is moved more than he will show.]

Francisco : I am sorry, sir.....I knew how high feeling had run.

Columbus [authoritatively] : Send Guillermo Ires to me !

Francisco [not without diffidence] : Sorry, sir, but.....

Columbus : Discipline knows no buts.

Francisco [angrily] : Discipline is a thing of the past, sir. It's you or us.

Columbus [to Don Pedro] : Don Pedro, let Guillermo Ires be sent to me. He shall know what it is like in irons.

[Pedro is half-way down the stairs to the quarter-deck when Guillermo Ires and other seamen rush in an angry mass towards Columbus, growling like infuriated animals.]

Columbus [in a thunderous voice] : Stop ! What is the meaning of this wild uproar ? [The men stand transfixed.]

The first men to move shall spend the rest of the night in irons !

[There is a perceptible pause, during which nobody moves. Then, with a wild cry, Guillermo Ires breaks away from the others and advances towards Columbus.]

Guillermo : And who's to put him in irons ? We are thirty to one.

Columbus *[calmly]* : If nobody else is available for the office, I will perform it myself. Get below ! Let me hear no more of this.

Guillermo *[in high excitement]* : We've stood too much. We've been duped day in, day out. We're men with the common feelings of men. We want our homes and our women. I say the Santa Maria shall turn her helm towards Spain at once, or we are not men but sheep.

Columbus *[still calm]* : And who shall navigate her ?

Guillermo : There's plenty here who can do that. The Devil's with you, we all know that, riding the easterly wind ; but we are not men unused to the sea. Once clear of this Devil's track to nowhere, we'll blow our way back to home.

[Signs of assent from the rest of the crew. Columbus raises his hand, appealing for silence. He is paler than his wont, but very calm.]

Columbus : Don Guillermo, you are an excellent sailor, a man of abundant resourcefulness. Some day, if

your tongue does not run away with your discretion, you will achieve prosperity in your calling. To-day you are an able-bodied seaman and no more: I am your captain. Your duty is to obey me as mine is to obey the Royal Sovereigns of Spain who sent me. Let that be clearly understood between us and we shall not fall out. Now return to your duties.

[Again a perceptible pause. Columbus's authoritative manner holds them. Presently Diego breaks out.]

Diego : Words for children ! Froth and scum ! We are men: reason with us !

Columbus : Silence !

[The tone of authority calms the men, who remain, however, in a huddled crowd, murmuring discontentedly. Columbus turns and goes up the stairs to the poop, where he stands and looks down upon the men.]

Diego [snarling] : I suppose you think you're on holy ground now ? [He bounds towards the stairs.]

Voices [tumultuously] : Have him down ! Pitch him overboard ! Put him in irons ! Devil's tool ! Italian renegade !

[They are about to stampede up the poop gangway, when Pepe runs to the foot of the stairs and stands with his arms spread out.]

Pepe : Cowards ! Cowards ! You will have to kill me first !

Voices : Out of the way ! Devil's whelp ! Lick-spittle !

Columbus : What ! Does that child stand between me and death ? [Silence follows the commencement of his speech.] Pepe ! Come here !

Pepe [going to him quickly] : 'My captain !'

[The men are somewhat sheepish.]

Columbus : Pepe ! This is a voyage of discovery. [The men growl.] I set out to discover a new world, a radiant land beyond unknown seas; to find new wealth and dominion for our Sovereign King and Queen, new souls for the sacrifice of our Saviour to redeem. So far I have discovered but one thing. [He pauses and continues with slow deliberation.] I have discovered that when a man is given a vision he must follow it alone. Loyalty passes like seaweed on an outgoing tide. Friendship breaks as a mast hollowed by worms breaks. Discipline, duty, and honourable obedience are bubbles that burst at the first contact. There remains but oneself. That is my only discovery so far, Pepe.

Pepe [his eyes gleaming with excitement] : Captain, I am loyal, I am still obedient, still your devoted servant.....

Columbus [with some emotion] : I am not ungrateful.

Pedro [scraping his throat, with dignity] : I hope my loyalty has never been in question, sir ? [He salutes.]

Columbus [returning the salute] : You have sometimes been silent, Don Pedro, when speech would have made your loyalty clear. But I thank you.....

[Columbus turns and looks out at sea; for a moment his attention is fixed. He peers more earnestly into the darkness. There is a movement among the men. He turns.]

Juan : We are simple men, sir.....

Columbus [hastily] : Shall simple men judge their betters?

Guillermo [surlily] : We may as well wait till to-morrow, at any rate.

Columbus : Dark deeds are better done in the dark.

[Guillermo, scowling, but sheepish, slinks off, followed by one or two of the seamen.]

Francisco : Desperate men do not always act up to the best that is in them, sir.

Columbus [with quiet irony] : I thank you for reminding me, Francisco. Your best cannot be bettered. Good night!

[Francisco half turns to speak again, but thinks better of it and goes, shamefaced. Several others go, too, sheepish. A brief silence. Columbus does not move; he is struggling with overwrought emotion. When he speaks his voice is not steady.]

Columbus : Go boy !

[Pepe seizes his hand, kisses it, and hastily descends to the quarter-deck and goes out.]

Columbus [turning to Pedro] : Two minutes ago, Don Pedro, I saw... I thought I saw... [He peers into the darkness.] It was..... It is.

Pedro [*in excitement*] : What, sir ?

Columbus : A light, faintly flickering, rising up and down.
Look ! [*He points.*]

Pedro : It is, sir ! Glory be to God !

[*At this moment there is a wild shout, off.*]

Voice [off] : A light ! A light ! Land ! Land !

[*A sailor comes running on, delirious with joy and excitement.*]

Sailor : Did you see it, sir ? A light ! Blessed Mother of God ! A light !

Columbus [*with quiet authority*] : Give the order to heave to.

CURTAIN

—Herman Ould

Sri Tapan Roy

class - ~~IX~~ - A

VERSE

Roll no. 17

BLOW, BLOW, THOU WINTER WIND

BLOW, blow, thou winter wind,
 Thou art not so unkind
 As man's ingratitude ;
 Thy tooth is not so keen,
 Because thou art not seen,
 Although thy breath be rude.

Heigh-ho ! sing, heigh-ho ! unto the green holly :
 Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly :
 Then, heigh-ho, the holly !
 This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
 That dost not bite so nigh
 As benefits forgot :
 Though thou the waters warp,
 Thy sting is not so sharp
 As friend remember'd not.

Heigh-ho ! sing, heigh-ho ! unto the green holly :
 Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly :
 Then, heigh-ho, the holly !
 This life is most jolly.

—William Shakespeare

THE QUALITY OF MERCY

THE quality of mercy is not strain'd,
 It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven

Upon the place beneath. It is twice bless'd,
 It blesseth him that gives and him that takes :
 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest ; it becomes
 The throned monarch better than his crown ;
 His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
 The attribute to awe and majesty,
 Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings ;
 But mercy is above this sceptred sway,
 It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
 It is an attribute to God himself,
 And earthly power doth then show likest God's
 When mercy seasons justice.

—*William Shakespeare*

A LAUGHING SONG

WHEN the green woods laugh with the voice of joy,
 And the dimpling stream runs laughing by ;
 When the air does laugh with our merry wit,
 And the green hill laughs with the noise of it ;
 When the meadows laugh with lively green,
 And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scene ;
 When Mary, and Susan, and Emily,
 With their sweet round mouths sing, 'Ha, ha, he !'
 When the painted birds laugh in the shade,
 Where our table with cherries and nuts is spread :
 Come live, and be merry, and join with me
 To sing the sweet chorus of 'Ha, ha, he !'

—*William Blake*

JOY AND WOE ARE WOVEN FINE

JOY and woe are woven fine,
A clothing for the soul divine ;
Under every grief and pine
Runs a joy with silken twine.
It is right it should be so ;
Man was made for joy and woe ;
And when this we rightly know,
Thro' the world we safely go.

—William Blake

WE ARE SEVEN A.E. 1932

—✓ A simple child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death ?

I met a little cottage Girl :
She was eight years old, she said ;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad :
Her eyes were fair, and very fair :
—Her beauty made me glad.✓

✓ Sisters and brothers, little Maid,
How many may you be ?
'How many ? Seven in all,' she said
And wondering looked at me.

‘And where are they ? I pray you tell.’
 She answered, ‘Seven are we ;
 And two of us at Conway dwell,
 And two are gone to sea.’

‘Two of us in the church-yard lie,
 My sister and my brother ;
 And, in the church-yard cottage, I
 Dwell near them with my mother.’

‘You say that two at Conway dwell,
 And two are gone to sea,
 Yet ye are seven ! I pray you tell,
 Sweet Maid, how this may be.’

Then did the little Maid reply,
 ‘Seven boys and girls are we ;
 Two of us in the church-yard lie,
 Beneath the church-yard tree.’

‘You run about, my little Maid,
 Your limbs they are alive ;
 If two are in the church-yard laid,
 Then ye are only five.’

‘Their graves are green, they may be seen,’
 The little Maid replied,
 ‘Twelve steps or more from my mother’s door,
 And they are side by side.

‘My stockings there I often knit,
 My kerchief there I hem ;
 And there upon the ground I sit,
 I sing a song to them.

‘And often after sun-set, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

‘The first that died was little Jane ;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain ;
And then she went away.

‘So in the church-yard she was laid ;
And, when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

‘And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side.’

‘How many are you, then,’ said I,
‘If they two are in heaven ?’
Quick was the little Maid’s reply,
‘Oh, Master ! we are seven.’

‘But they are dead ; those two are dead !
Their spirits are in heaven !’
‘Twas throwing words away ; for still
The little Maid would have her will,
And said, ‘Nay, we are seven.’

LUCY GRAY

OFT I had heard of Lucy Gray :
 And, when I crossed the wild,
 I chanced to see at break of day
 The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew ;
 She dwelt on a wide moor,
 —The sweetest thing that ever grew
 Beside a human door !

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
 The hare upon the green ;
 But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
 Will never more be seen.

‘To-night will be a stormy night—
 You to the town must go ;
 And take a lantern, Child, to light
 Your mother through the snow.’

‘That, Father ! will I gladly do :
 ’Tis scarcely afternoon—
 The minster-clock has just struck two,
 And yonder is the moon !’

At this the Father raised his hook,
 And snapped a faggot-band ;
 He plied his work ;—and Lucy took
 The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe :
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time :
She wandered up and down ;
And many a hill did Lucy climb :
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide ;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood
That overlooked the moor ;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward, cried,
'In heaven we all shall meet ;'
—When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's edge
They tracked the footmarks small ;
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,
And by the long stone-wall ;

And then an open field they crossed :
The marks were still the same ;
They tracked them on, nor ever lost ;
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank
 Those footmarks, one by one,
 Into the middle of the plank ;
 And further there were none !

—Yet some maintain that to this day
 She is a living child ;
 That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
 Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
 And never looks behind ;
 And sings a solitary song
 That whistles in the wind.

—William Wordsworth.

TO A BUTTERFLY

I'VE watched you now a full half-hour,
 Self-poised upon that yellow flower ;
 And, little butterfly ! indeed
 I know not if you sleep or feed.
 How motionless !—not frozen seas
 More motionless ! and then
 What joy awaits you, when the breeze
 Hath found you out among the trees,
 And calls you forth again !

This plot of orchard ground is ours ;
 My trees they are, my Sister's flowers ;
 Here rest your wings when they are weary ;
 Here lodge as in a sanctuary !
 Come often to us, fear no wrong ;
 Sit near us on the bough !

We'll talk of sunshine and of song,
 And summer days, when we were young;
 Sweet childish days, that were as long
 As twenty days are now.

—William Wordsworth

**BREATHES THERE THE MAN, WITH SOUL
 SO DEAD ?**

BREATHES there the man, with soul so dead,
 Who never to himself hath said,
 'This is my own, my native land !'
 Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,
 As home his footsteps he hath turn'd,
 From wandering on a foreign strand ?
 If such there breathe, go, mark him well ;
 For him no minstrel raptures swell ;
 High though his titles, proud his name,
 Boundless his wealth as wish can claim ;
 Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
 The wretch, concentrated all in self,
 Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
 And, doubly dying, shall go down
 To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
 Unwept, unhonour'd, and unsung.

—Sir Walter Scott

PROMETHEUS

TITAN ! to whose immortal eyes
 The sufferings of mortality,
 Seen in their sad reality,
 Were not as things that gods despise ;

What was thy pity's recompense ?
 A silent suffering, and intense ;
 The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
 All that the proud can feel of pain,
 The agony they do not show,
 The suffocating sense of woe,

Which speaks but in its loneliness,
 And then is jealous lest the sky
 Should have a listener, nor will sigh
 Until its voice is echoless.

Titan ! to thee the strife was given
 Between the suffering and the will,
 Which torture where they cannot kill ;
 And the inexorable Heaven,
 And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
 The ruling principle of Hate,
 Which for its pleasure doth create
 The things it may annihilate,
 Refused thee even the boon to die ;
 The wretched gift eternity
 Was thine—and thou hast borne it well.
 All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
 Was but the menace which flung back
 On him the torments of thy rack ;
 The fate thou didst so well foresee,
 But would not to appease him tell ;
 And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
 And in his Soul a vain repentance,
 And evil dread so ill dissembled,
 That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

SONG—TO THE MEN OF ENGLAND

I

MEN of England, wherefore plough
For the lords who lay ye low ?
Wherefore weave with toil and care
The rich robes your tyrants wear ?

II

Wherefore feed and clothe and save,
From the cradle to the grave,
Those ungrateful drones who would
Drain your sweat—nay, drink your blood ?

III

Wherefore, Bees of England, forge
Many a weapon, chain, and scourge,
That these stingless drones may spoil
The forced produce of your toil ?

IV

Have ye leisure, comfort, calm,
Shelter, food, love's gentle balm ?
Or what is it ye buy so dear
With your pain and with your fear ?

V

The seed ye sow another reaps ;
The wealth ye find another keeps ;
The robes ye weave another wears ;
The arms ye forge another bears.

VI

Sow seed,—but let no tyrant reap ;
 Find wealth,—let no impostor heap ;
 Weave robes,—let not the idle wear ;
 Forge arms, in your defence to bear.

VII

Shrink to your cellars, holes, and cells ;
 In halls ye deck another dwells.
 Why shake the chains ye wrought ? Ye see
 The steel ye tempered glance on ye.

VIII

With plough and spade and hoe and loom,
 Trace your grave, and build your tomb,
 And weave your winding-sheet, till fair
 England be your sepulchre !

—P. B. Shelley

ROBIN HOOD
(To A Friend)

NO ! those days are gone away,
 And their hours are old any gray,
 And their minutes buried all
 Under the down-trodden pall
 Of the leaves of many years :
 Many times have Winter's shears,
 Frozen North, and Chilling East,

Sounded tempests to the feast
Of the forest's whispering fleeces,
Since men knew nor rent nor leases.

No, the bugle sounds no more,
And the twanging bow no more ;
Silent is the ivory shrill
Past the heath and up the hill ;
There is no mid-forest laugh,
Where lone Echo gives the half
To some wight, amazed to hear
Jesting, deep in forest drear.

On the fairest time of June
You may go, with sun or moon,
Or the seven stars to light you
Or the polar ray to right you ;
But you never may behold
Little John, or Robin bold :
Never one, of all the clan,
Thrumming on an empty can
Some old hunting ditty, while
He doth his green way beguile
To fair hostess Merriment,
Down beside the pasture Trent :
For he left the merry tale,
Messenger for spicy ale.

Gone, the merry morris din,
Gone, the song of Gamelyn ;
Gone, the tough-belted outlaw
Idling in the "grene shawe" ;
All are gone away and past !

And if Robin should be cast
 Sudden from his tufted grave,
 And if Marian should have
 Once again her forest days,
 She would weep, and he would craze ;
 He would swear, for all his oaks,
 Fall'n beneath the dock-yard strokes,
 Have rotted on the briny seas ;
 She would weep that her wild bees
 Sang not to her—strange ! that money
 Can't be got without hard money !

So it is ; yet let us sing
 Honour to the old bow-string !
 Honour to the bugle-horn !
 Honour to the woods unshorn !
 Honour to the Lincoln green !
 Honour to the archer keen !
 Honour to right little John,
 And the horse he rode upon !
 Honour to bold Robin Hood,
 Sleeping in the underwood :
 Honour to Maid Marian,
 And to all the Sherwood clan !
 Though their days have hurried by
 Let us two a burden try.

—John Keats

TO ONE WHO HAS BEEN LONG IN CITY PENT

TO one who has been long in city pent,
 'Tis very sweet to look into the fair

And open face of heaven,—to breathe a prayer
Full in the smile of the blue firmament.

Who is more happy, when, with heart's content,
Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair
Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair
And gentle tale of love and languishment ?

Returning home at evening, with an ear
Catching the notes of Philomel,—an eye
Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright career,
He mourns that day so soon has glided by :
E'en like the passage of an angel's tear
That falls through the clear ether silently.

—John Keats

LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT

LEAD, kindly light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on :
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on :
Keep Thou my feet ; I do not ask to see
The distant scene ; one step's enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou
Should'st lead me on :
I loved to choose and see my path ; but now,
Lead Thou me on :
I loved the garish day, and spite of fears
Pride ruled my will : remember not past years.

So long Thy power hath blest me ; sure it still
 Will lead me on,
 O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
 The night is gone,
 And with the morn those angel faces smile,
 Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

—Cardinal Newman

HOME THEY BROUGHT HER WARRIOR DEAD

HOME they brought her warrior dead :
 She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry :
 All her maidens, watching, said,
 'She must weep or she will die.'

Then they praised him, soft and low,
 Call'd him worthy to be loved,
 Truest friend and noblest foe ;
 Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
 Lightly to the warrior stept,
 Took the face-cloth from the face ;
 Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
 Set his child upon her knee—
 Like summer tempest came her tears—
 'Sweet my child, I live for thee.'

—Lord Tennyson

A FAREWELL

FLOW down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
Thy tribute wave deliver :
No more by thee my steps shall be
For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,
A rivulet and then a river :
Nowhere by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder tree,
And here thine aspen shiver :
And here by thee will hum the bee,
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
A thousand moons will quiver ;
But not by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

—*Lord Tennyson*

HOME-THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD

O, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now !

And after April, when May follows,
 And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows—
 Hark ! where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
 Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
 Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bentspray's edge—
 That's the wise thrush ; he sings each song twice over,
 Lest you should think he never could recapture
 The first fine careless rapture !

And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
 All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
 The buttercups, the little children's dower,
 —Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower !

—*Robert Browning*

YUSSOUUF

A STRANGER came one night to Yussouf's tent,
 Saying, 'Behold one outcast and in dread,
 Against whose life the bow of power is bent.
 Who flies, and hath not where to lay his head ;
 I come to thee for shelter and for food,
 To Yussouf, called through all our tribes,
 "The Good."

'This tent is mine,' said Yussouf, 'but no more
 Than it is God's; come in, and be at peace;
 Freely shalt thou partake of all my store
 As I of His who buildeth over these
 Our tents His glorious roof of night and day,
 And at whose door none ever yet heard "Nay !"

So Yussouf entertained his guest that night,
 And, waking him ere day, said : 'Here is gold,
 My swiftest horse is saddled for thy flight,
 Depart before the prying day grow bold.'
 As one lamp lights another, nor grows less,
 So nobleness enkindleth nobleness :

That inward light the stranger's face made grand;
 Which shines from all self-conquest; kneeling low,
 He bowed his forehead upon Yussouf's hand,
 Sobbing : 'O Sheik, I cannot leave thee so;
 I will repay thee : all this thou hast done
 Unto that Ibrahim who slew thy son !'

'Take thrice the gold,' said Yussouf, 'for with thee
 into the desert, never to return,
 My one black thought shall ride away from me :
 First-born, for whom by day and night I yearn,
 Balanced and just are all of God's decrees;
 Thou art avenged, my first-born, sleep in peace !'

—James Russell Lowell

POETS TO COME

POETS to come ! orators, singers, musicians to come !
 Not today is to justify me, and answer what I am for,
 But you, a new brood, native, athletic, continental,
 greater than before known,
 Arouse ! Arouse—for you must justify me—you must
 answer.

I myself but write one of two indicative words for the future,
I but advance a moment, only to wheel and hurry back in
the darkness.

I am a man who, sauntering along, without fully stopping,
turns a casual look upon you, and then averts his face,
Leaving it to you to prove and define it,
Expecting the main things from you.

—Walt Whitman

QUIET WORK

ONE lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee
One lesson, that in every wind is blown,
One lesson of two duties serv'd in one,
Though the loud world proclaim their enmity—

Of Toil unsever'd from Tranquility :
Of Labour, that in still advance outgrows
Far noisier schemes, accomplish'd in Repose,
Too great for haste, too high for rivalry.
Yes, while on earth a thousand discords ring,
Man's senseless uproar mingling with his toil,
Still do thy sleepless ministers move on,
Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting :
Still working, blaming still our vain turmoil;
Labourers that shall not fail, when man is gone.

—Matthew Arnold

UPHILL

DOES the road wind uphill all the way ?

Yes, to the very end.

Will the day's journey take the whole long day ?
From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place ?
 A roof for when the slow, dark hours begin.
 May not the darkness hide it from my face ?
 You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night ?
 Those who have gone before.
 Then must I knock, or call when just in sight ?
 They will not keep you standing at that door.
 Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak ?
 Of labour you shall find the sum.
 Will there be beds for me and all who seek ?
 Yes, beds for all who come.

—*Christina Georgina Rossetti*

A BIRTHDAY

MY heart is like a singing bird
 Whose nest is in a watered shoot :
 My heart is like an apple-tree
 Whose boughs are bent with thick-set fruit;
 My heart is like a rainbow shell
 That paddles in a halcyon sea;
 My heart is gladder than all these
 Because my love is come to me.
 Raise me a dais of silk and down;
 Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
 Carve it in doves and pomegranates,
 And peacocks with a hundred eyes;

Work it in gold and silver grapes,
 In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys;
 Because the birthday of my life
 Is come, my love is come to me.

—*Christina Georgina Rossetti*

PIED BEAUTY

GLORY be to God for dappled things—
 For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow ;
 For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim ;
 Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
 Landscape plotted and pieced—fold, fallow, and plough;
 And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
 Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how ?)
 With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
 He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change : Praise him.

—*G. M. Hopkins*

THE FIRST SPRING MORNING

LOOK ! Look ! the spring is come :
 O feel the gentle air,
 That wanders thro' the boughs to burst
 The thick buds everywhere !
 The birds are glad to see
 The high unclouded sun :
 Winter is fled away, they sing,
 The gay time is begun.

Adown the meadows green
 Let us go dance and play,
 And look for violets in the lane,
 And ramble far away
 To gather primroses,
 That in the woodland grow,
 And hunt for oxlips, or if yet
 The blades of bluebells show :

There the old woodman gruff
 Hath half the coppice cut,
 And weaves the hurdles all day long
 Beside his willow hut.
 We'll steal on him, and then
 Startle him, all with glee
 Singing our song of winter fled
 And summer soon to be.

—*Robert Bridges*

I LOVE ALL BEAUTEOUS THINGS

I LOVE all beauteous things,
 I seek and adore them;
 God hath no better praise,
 And man in his hasty days
 Is honoured for them.

I too will something make
 And joy in the making;
 Altho' to-morrow it seem
 Like the empty words of a dream
 Remembered on waking.

—*Robert Bridges*

ROMANCE

I WILL make you brooches and toys for your delight
 Of bird-song at morning and star-shine at night.
 I will make a palace fit for you and me,
 Of green days in forest and blue days at sea.

I will make my kitchen, and you shall keep your room,
 Where white flows the river and bright blows the broom,
 And you shall wash your linen and keep your body white
 In rainfall at morning and dewfall at night.

And this shall be for music when no one else is near,
 The fine song for singing, the rare song to hear !
 That only I remember, that only you admire,
 Of the broad road that stretches and the roadside fire.

—*Robert Louis Stevenson*

THE LAMPLIGHTER

MY tea is nearly ready and the sun has left the sky;
 It's time to take the window to see Leerie going by;
 For every night at tea time and before you take your seat,
 With lantern and with ladder he comes posting up the street.

Now Tom would be a driver and Maria go to sea,
 And my papa's a banker and as rich as he can be;
 But I, when I am stronger and can choose what I'm to do,
 O Leerie, I'll go round at night and light the lamps with you !

For we are very lucky, with a lamp before the door;
 And Leerie stops to light it as he lights so many more;
 And O ! before you hurry by with ladder and with light,
 O Leerie, see a little child and nod to him to-night !

—*Robert Louis Stevenson*

THE NIGHT HAS A THOUSAND EYES

THE night has a thousand eyes,
 And the day but one;
 Yet the light of the bright world dies
 With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
 And the heart but one;
 Yet the light of a whole life dies
 When love is done.

—F. W. Bourdillon

WHERE THE MIND IS WITHOUT FEAR

WHERE the mind is without fear and
 the head is held high;
 Where knowledge is free;
 Where the world has not been broken
 up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;
 Where words come out from the depth of truth;
 Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards
 perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost
 its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
 Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-
 widening thought and action—
 Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my
 country awake.

—Rabindranath Tagore

CITIES AND THRONES AND POWERS

CITIES and Thrones and Powers
 Stand in Time's eye,
 Almost as long as flowers,
 Which daily die :
 But, as new buds put forth
 To glad new men,
 Out of the spent and unconsidered Earth
 The Cities rise again.

This season's Daffodil
 She never hears
 What change, what chance, what chill,
 Cut down last year's;
 But with bold countenance,
 And knowledge small,
 Esteems her seven days' continuance
 To be perpetual.

So Time that is o'er-kind
 To all that be,
 Ordains us e'en as blind,
 As bold as she :
 That in our very death,
 And burial sure,
 Shadow to shadow, well persuaded, saith,
 'See how our works endure !'

—Rudyard Kipling

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

I WILL arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
 And a small cabin build there, of clay and
 wattles made ;

Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the
honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace
comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where
the cricket sings ;
There midnight's all a-glimmer, and noon a
purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by
the shore ;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements
gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

—William Butler Yeats

LEISURE

WHAT is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare ?

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows :

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass :

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night :

Not time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance :

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began ?

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

—*William Henry Davies*

THE RAIN

I HEAR leaves drinking rain ;
I hear rich leaves on top
Giving the poor beneath
Drop after drop ;
'Tis a sweet noise to hear
These green leaves drinking near.

And when the Sun comes out,
After this rain shall stop,
A wondrous Light will fill
Each dark, round drop ;
I hope the Sun shines bright :
'Twill be a lovely sight.

—*William Henry Davies*

TIME, YOU OLD GIPSY MAN

TIME, you old gipsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day ?

All things I'll give you
 Will you be my guest,
 Bells for your jennet
 Of silver the best,
 Goldsmiths shall beat you
 A great golden ring,
 Peacocks shall bow to you,
 Little boys sing,
 Oh, and sweet girls will
 Festoon you with may,
 Time, you old gipsy,
 Why hasten away ?

STATE MUSEUM
G. W. G.

Last week in Babylon,
 Last night in Rome,
 Morning, and in the crush
 Under Paul's dome ;
 Under Paul's dial
 You tighten your rein—
 Only a moment,
 And off once again ;
 Off to some city
 Now blind in the womb.,
 Off to another
 Ere that's in the tomb.

Time, you old gipsy man,
 Will you not stay,
 Put up your caravan
 Just for one day ?

STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING

WHOSE woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

—*Robert Frost*

ALONE

A VERY old woman
Lives in yon house.
The squeak of the cricket,
The stir of the mouse,
Are all she knows
Of the earth and us.

Once she was young,
Would dance and play,
Like many another
Young popinjay ;
And run to her mother
At dusk of day.

And colours bright
She delighted in ;
The fiddle to hear,
And to lift her chin,
And sing as small
As a twittering wren.

But age apace
Comes at last to all ;
And a lone house filled
With the cricket's call ;
And the scampering mouse
In the hollow wall.

—Walter De La Mare

THE SONG OF THE PALANQUIN-BEARERS

LIGHTLY, O lightly we bear her along,
She sways like a flower in the wind of our song ;
She skims like a bird on the foam of a stream,
She floats like a laugh from the lips of a dream.

Gaily, O gaily we glide and we sing,
 We bear her along like a pearl on a string.
 Softly, O softly we bear her along,
 She hangs like a star in the dew of our song.

She springs like a beam on the brow of the tide,
 She falls like a tear from the eyes of a bride.
 Lightly, O lightly we glide and we sing,
 We bear her along like a pearl on a string.

—*Sarojini Naidu*

HOLINESS

IF all the carts were painted gay,
 And all the streets swept clean,
 And all the children came to play
 By hollyhocks, with green
 Grasses to grow between.

If all the houses looked as though
 Some heart were in their stones,
 If all the people that we know
 Were dressed in scarlet gowns,
 With feathers in their crowns.

I think this gaiety would make
 A spiritual land.
 I think that holiness would take
 This laughter by the hand,
 Till both should understand.

—*John Drinkwater*

THE MOSQUITO KNOWS

THE mosquito knows full well, small as he is
he's a beast of prey.
But after all
he only takes his bellyful,
he doesn't put my blood in the bank.

—D. H. Lawrence

WANDER-THIRST

BEYOND the East the Sunrise; beyond the West the
Sea;
And East and West the Wander-Thirst that will not let
me be;
It works in me like madness to bid me say good-bye,
For the seas call, and the stars call, and oh ! the call of the
sky !

I know not where the white road runs, nor what the blue
hills are,
But a man can have the sun for friend, and for his guide a
star;
And there's no end of voyaging when once the voice is
heard,
For the rivers call, and the road calls, and oh ! the call of
a bird !

Yonder the long horizon lies, and there by night and day
The old ships draw to home again, the young ships sail
away;

And come I may, but go I must, and if men ask you why,
 You may put the blame on the stars and the sun, and the
 white road and the sky.

—Gerald Gould

ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH

WHAT passing-bells for these who die as cattle ?
 Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
 Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
 Can patter out their hasty orisons.
 No mockeries for them ; no prayers nor bells,
 Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,—
 The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells ;
 And bugles calling for them from sad shires.
 What candles may be held to speed them all ?
 Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
 Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.
 The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall ;
 Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
 And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

—Wilfred Owen



Price : Rs. 2.00